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NEW STATESMAN

Ambassador College
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British Airways

British Shipbuilders

BRITISH GAS

NCB

STATE CAPITALISM

Women workers: positive action

China's warlords / Gagged artists / Devolution fallout

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THE LABOUR Co-ordinating Committee were right to release the party's draft manifesto – and right to append their own rival version. It cannot be wrong to widen debate, or to challenge the hugger-mugger process which generally produces platforms. And their timing is right: challenging those calls for spurious unity which come, very often, from those who eroded unity in the first place and wish now for protection from the consequences. The prospect of a full-dress electoral triumph for reaction is one which demands more, not less originality of argument.

Some ingredients of the official draft are welcome. It is tolerably forthright about needing to oversee the doings of our professional political class by the organisation of serious back-bench committees. The proposals on freedom of information, civil service reform, the honours system, and the right of ministers to control civil servants are correctly addressed to the systems of patronage, bureaucracy and privilege which today govern our society.

And there is much to welcome in the rival document. It is unambiguously the work of the Bennite left: yet the position taken on Europe is reasonable and flexible. The recognition appears to be growing that a retreat into chauvinism – however treacherously seductive in electoral terms – is no way forward for socialists and radicals. But there are still troublesome silences: nothing on racial and sexual equality; and on Northern Ireland a fudging of issues that have too long been fudged. In foreign affairs and defence there is little more than genial banality, and in reply to media bias there is the weary thought of a National Printing Corporation. (Don't we have *enough* national corporations? Isn't it clear that the need is to re-organise the print business so that people with something to say can organise their own initiatives?)

But it is in the matter of their own central interest – industrial regeneration – that the Co-ordinating Committee's dissidents are least effective. Notoriously, it's an area where saying what's wrong with the other fellow's idea is easier than putting forward one's own. All the same, is it very convincing to emphasise compulsory planning agreements instead of shopsoiled ideals of wholesale nationalisation? Like Benn, however, the NEW STATESMAN isn't against import controls: we can accept that an economy like ours may be unable to manage without them during reconstruction.

But the dissident document still under-rates the true complexity of our industrial predicament. It still bears traces of that speech-pattern in which Britain's industrial workforce requires only to be liberated from capitalism – how is anyone to be *liberated* by more central planning? – in order for new wealth to be poured forth. It is still too easy to see this document's language fitting in with all those sad panegyrics about Concorde, and other less subtle ways of avoiding the fact that foreign competitors very often are better at making aeroplanes, typewriters, musical instruments and cars.

Such neo-chauvinism, once deflated, turns readily to despair: to the belief that no part of the industrial structure inherited from capitalism is able to fit itself for international competition. Yet the indications are that neither simplicity is true. As we argue elsewhere in this issue, the degeneracy of much of our industry does trace back wretchedly far into social, financial and educational injustices which cannot be repaired in timespans much shorter than those over which they have existed. But the pattern remains an uneven one. There are sectors like pharmaceuticals and chemical engineering in which British-based concerns perform unusually well. There are others in the aerospace industry and the motor-components industry where the British presence can at least hold its own. There are important areas like computers and microprocessors which are far from lost – examples to place alongside heavy engineering, where the damage will take generations to undo.

Broad-based economic planning is, of course, indispensable. But the detail of the matter has more to do with measures which will return to people confidence and control in their own lives: with the return of freedom to take risks and attempt new ideas. There is no reason, theoretical or empirical, to connect this with the institutionalising of private property – just the reverse, for it is the favour which our present tax and credit system offers to established property which is the chief prop of stasis and industrial hierarchy. We require an industrial system which will make it steadily more difficult for anyone to acquire property in specific industrial assets – but which will make it easier for groups of workers to experiment with such assets. The progress involved, if it is to be made, will neither be swiftly visible nor readily plannable. But the demand for such opportunities becomes clearer with each step in the decline of the traditional industrial system, and it must be Labour's business to convince the people that it wishes to satisfy the demand.

NOTES

Looking for trouble

Michael Leapman writes from New York: Thirty corporate executives, several from big multinationals, met here for two days last week to discuss political violence – how to predict it and how to cope with it when it comes. Agencies of the US government with special expertise in the field were also represented. I was one of two reporters allowed in on condition that we did not identify the participants.

Iran was on everyone's mind as an instance of inferior prediction. 'The United States government has special abilities in getting information.' observed one of its representatives candidly, 'but I don't know if we have any special abilities in analysing it.' Several of the businessmen criticised the performance of the US Embassy in Tehran, which until a late stage was advising American companies not to pull people out for fear of damaging the Shah's credibility. There was a lot of *mea culpa* about: the head of foreign affairs for a major oil company confessed that he had instructed a subordinate to modify his prediction of the Shah's downfall, so as not to worry the company's brass.

Yet the businessmen did not join in the fashionable lament about their country's inability nowadays to exert hegemony. Everyone agreed that even if Iran is lost as a pillar of American influence, it need not necessarily be written off as a place where American companies can make money. The most-quoted model was Gulf Oil in Angola, which began operating there when the Portuguese were in charge and prospers still, its installations guarded by obliging Cuban troops.

There were hints about how to avoid being kidnapped (vary your route to work) and what to do if it happened (make sure the people you are bargaining with actually have your man before you pay up). A senior New York policeman observed that New York seemed to be accepted as neutral ground, a useful contact point where political atrocities were not generally committed: he was reminded sharply that this was once said about Beirut.

As for where political violence might strike next, the experts have plainly been unnerved by Iran, and almost every country you can think of was mentioned as a possible trouble spot, including Britain. Among the likeliest contenders are Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia, El Salvador, Mexico, Uganda, Zambia and Egypt, which one speaker dubbed 'Bangladesh on the Nile'. The businessmen, though, kept their cool and their sense of priorities. While it was true, one pointed out, that there were a lot of kidnappings in El Salvador, it was a place where you could get an exceptionally good return on investment capital.

Oil firms: higher taxes but easier avoidance

Nicholas Hirst writes: Despite much huffing and puffing from the oil companies the government is going ahead with its proposal to increase North Sea Oil taxes: Petroleum Revenue Tax will go up from 45 per cent to 60 per cent and there will be only minor reductions in the allowances against tax. The Ministers concerned – Joel Barnett at the Treasury and Dickson Mabon at the Department of Energy – have rejected the companies' arguments that increased taxes and tougher conditions for obtaining concessions are likely to reduce the development of minor fields, discourage exploration and cut the amount of oil which is exploited. The oil companies, both publicly and privately, have made much of this argument. In addition, at the last round of licensing Esso decided that the areas available were not worth applying for on the conditions that were offered, and Shell made a very limited application. The rate of exploratory drilling has fallen sharply from previous years.

The Department has argued consistently that it was only too willing to use its discretionary power to waive royalties in order to ease the development of a marginal field. In return the companies have argued that such power, which has never been used, is worthless: to be effective, a system of royalty relief would have to mention a specific rate of

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WHERE LIVE STREET
EL ROPO
DID YOU REMEMBER TO GET A BABY SITTER, NORA?
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD
UNESCO
WASN'T WORTH IT, DUCKIE — LAST TIME SHE DRANK EVERYTHING IN THE HOUSE!
Ralph STEADMAN

return. Despite the difficulties in producing such a formula, at one stage it seemed that the Department would introduce legislation to allow specific relief to be given from royalty payments. However, the submission from one of the American 'seven sisters' companies said that oil companies invested not in individual fields but in an 'oil province'. If relief was to be given, the submission said, it should allow companies to trade off good and bad investments in the North Sea as a whole.

The administrative complications of providing royalty relief on such a basis under specific rules would, in the Department's view, be enormous. It does consider, however, that discretionary relief could prove successful. As a result the Budget is likely to confirm the planned increase in PRT but propose a new form of words explaining the possible conditions under which royalty relief may be available.

Burying the evidence

John Draper writes: Secrecy within the Department of Health and Social Security does not stop at the refusal to publish the notorious 'A' code and other instructions given to officials vetting claimants. For several months now the National Council for One Parent Families has been engaged in a war of words with Social Services Secretary David Ennals over his reluctance to publish survey material about the relative poverty of one and two parent families on supplementary benefit.

The matter first arose when Ennals delivered the Eleanor Rathbone lecture in January last year. He said that David Donnison, chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, had found evidence that two parent families on SB 'fare less well' than single parents on benefit. He added that this had to be taken into account in deciding priorities.

The council was furious at Ennals's remarks, which they said fuelled the 'inveterate prejudice' within Whitehall against lone parents. In a letter to Ennals last month, the council said: 'Until this evidence is published it is hard for any of us to debate the matter rationally. But from what we hear of the basic methodology of the survey we are sceptical that any evidence really exists to show that two parent families on SB face a harder time than one parent families.'

The council's suspicions seem to have been well founded. For last week Donnison, like Ennals before him, turned down a request from the council to publish the research, explaining that the findings of a 'small scale inquiry . . . could be quoted out of context in a misleading way.' He added that the study used 'matched' samples of one and two parent families. In other words they were selected to meet the survey's needs, and were not representative of all one and two parent families on supplementary benefit. Donnison was, of course, silent about whether Ennals had used the results of such a limited survey 'in a misleading way'.

Remember Oilgate?

Martin Bailey writes: The British government seems to lack a certain sense of urgency over Rhodesian sanctions. In June 1968 an MP asked whether BOAC's office in Salisbury would be closed to tighten sanctions. The Attorney-General replied that he would 'certainly examine that.' Four years later the Foreign Office revealed that 'the issues raised are still under consideration.' Then in April last year the Anti-Apartheid Movement wrote to ask about the British Airways office. Minister of State Ted Rowlands replied that 'it remains our policy to keep these matters under review, but you will appreciate that they are very complex and I regret it may be a little time before I can give you a substantive answer.' Last December Anti-Apartheid wrote back to see where things stood. Rowlands revealed that 'we are in contact with the Department of Trade and British Airways on this matter and I will inform you as soon as possible of the outcome of this consultation. Flights between London and Salisbury have now finally been suspended – because of guerrilla action. Meanwhile a Parliamentary inquiry into the sanctions scandal has still not been set up.

A similarly casual attitude seems to infect the courts. David West, a director of Lucas, was recently fined the princely sum of £500 for supplying some £29,000 worth of motor vehicle spares to Rhodesia. That works out at under 2 per cent of the cost of the goods, so there shouldn't be too much difficulty absorbing the fine. The judge did admit that the fine was low, but he told West that 'from the outset of the investigation you have been frank and that is something to your credit.' Doubtless the oil companies are hoping for similar leniency if Oilgate ever goes to court.

Meanwhile a coalition of church groups is planning to present a shareholder resolution at the Shell AGM in May condemning the company for sanctions-busting. The big pension funds and City institutions will probably complain about politics being brought into business, and then vote against. But at least a formal resolution should force Shell's chairman to explain how it was that the company became Rhodesia's major oil supplier.

New NS literary editor

The editor of the NS writes: David Caute will shortly take over from Martin Amis as literary editor of the NS. Julian Barnes will be deputy literary editor.

David Caute was born in 1936. He received a first in history at Oxford, followed by a DPhil. He was a fellow of All Souls until his resignation in 1965: he has taught at New York and Columbia, and was reader in social and political theory at Brunel University until he left in 1970 to write full-time. He has produced novels (*At Fever Pitch*, *Comrade Jacob*, *The Decline of the West*, *The Occupation*), political studies (*Communism and the French Intellectuals*, *The Left in Europe since 1789*, *Fanon*, *The Fellow Travellers*, *Cuba, Yes?*), essays (*The Illusion*, *Collision*), and plays for stage, radio and television (*Songs for an Autumn Rifle*, *The Demonstration*, *Fallout*, *The Fourth World*, *Brecht and Company*). He is on the executive of the Writer's Guild.

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After the poll

'WHEN GOVERNMENT authority is not adequate to control some section of the government's own followers or of the public at large, it may be increasingly tempted to resort to referendums to endow its policies with an extra legitimacy. Because the device worked in 1975, it is more likely to be invoked again.' David Butler's conclusion on referendums in Britain, in a book published earlier this year*, is already out of date. More apposite is the comment made by former Labour MP David Marquand last weekend: 'Parliament passed the buck to the people, who have passed it back to Parliament. The device has failed.' Such failure is largely inevitable when referendums – whose great attraction is that they are supposed to provide a final and incontrovertible expression of popular will – are merely consultative rather than mandatory; as the late Reginald Maudling pointed out in a letter to *The Times* last summer, when the shadow cabinet was considering the idea of a referendum on capital punishment:

> There can be no doubt that the majority of the public would support the restoration of capital punishment . . . The only purpose of a referendum would be to bring pressure on MPs to vote for a proposal they would otherwise reject . . . I do not believe that whatever the referendum disclosed Members would vote against their consciences and so there would be no practical effect.

It is worth noting that in Switzerland – which has had five times as many referendums in the past decade as all the other European democracies put together – referendum results are always binding on the government.

George Cunningham's 40 per cent rule was clearly another reason for the failure of the government's buck-passing exercise. Although it is not uncommon for states to require a two-thirds majority of those voting on a constitutional amendment, the practice of counting abstentions as effective votes is rare: an illuminating example of the follies to which this can lead was given by the Swiss referendum of 1802 on the Second Helvetic Constitution, when it was announced beforehand that abstentions would be considered as *affirmative* votes; although 92,500 people voted against and only 72,500 in favour, the constitution was passed because of the 167,000 abstentions.

The classic case for referendums was put by Rousseau in *Du Contrat Social*:

> The deputies of the people . . . cannot be their representatives; they can only be their commissioners, and as such are not qualified to conclude anything definitively. No act of theirs can be a law unless it has been ratified by the people in person; and without that ratification nothing is a law.

But in fact the referendum is an extremely crude method of gauging popular will, since the people are not asked 'What is the best solution to this problem?' but simply 'Do you or do you not support the solution we propose?' The option of amendment is not offered on the voting slip.

In Australia, the only non-constitutional referendum in the past sixty years was over the choice of a national song in 1977. Although the result was not impressive ('Advance Australia Fair' beat 'Waltzing Matilda'), this initiative does at least suggest the sort of issue which might perhaps be trusted to this unwieldy and oversimplifying device. Those who still put their trust in referendums would do well to remember Mrs Thatcher's threat to put major industrial disputes to a referendum: it doesn't take much imagination to see what a field day the *Daily Mail* and its ilk would have in *that* campaign.

Francis Wheen

**Referendums: A Comparative Study of Practice and Theory*, American Enterprise Institute $4.75

POLITICS
Patrick Wintour

The Government's future may rest with the Unionists

Jim's Ulster gamble

PARADOXICALLY, the outcome of the Government's defeat on the Scottish and Welsh referendums is that the Government may now go for more devolution, this time in Northern Ireland. It has not taken the Government's whips very long to abandon any attempt to overturn the George Cunningham 40 per cent ammendment and realise that the party's survival instead rests with the Ulster Unionists, 'the parliamentary B Specials,' as Michael Foot once described them.

The arithmetic, briefly, is that Labour's 306 MPs confront a likely alliance of 305 Tory, Liberal and Scottish Nationalist MPs. In their more sanguine moments the whips believe that two Scottish Labour MPs and three Welsh Nationalists will side with them against the Tories. Already long queues of whips from both sides of the House are forming, offering drinks and generally ingratiating themselves with the 12 Northern Ireland MPs who now hold the balance of power.

Two of these twelve are catholics – Gerry Pitt of the SDLP and Frank Maguire, the Irish nationalist publican whose only two words in the Chamber are reputed to have been 'I'm here.' Maguire will probably not vote or attend the eventual confidence vote; the Labour whip Jock Stallard, who used to cajole him across the channel, resigned three weeks ago over the Government Bill to give Northern Ireland more seats in Westminster. Gerry Fitt is so angered by this same Bill that he may even vote against the Government. The ten Ulster Unionists have been divided ever since the abortive strike in 1976 and also since Enoch Powell started to take command. Only seven Unionists now take the Official Unionist whip. Those outside, James Kilfedder (a Powell-hater who resigned last week), Ian Paisley and John Dunlop, will probably vote against the Government.

So the inner core of crucial votes are those of the seven official Unionists. Immediately before the Lib-Lab pact was sealed in March 1976, Callaghan, in an attempt to make himself absolutely safe in the confidence vote, committed himself to increasing the number of Northern Ireland seats by about five. With indecent haste a Bill has been rushed through the House that is returning from the Lords this week and will then receive Royal Assent.

It is difficult to underestimate the effect of the Bill on Ireland; it has been said there is a bomb in its every clause. Though there has been a realisation since the Kilbrandon Commission that Ulster was underrepresented in Westminster, the Northern Ireland Office under Merlyn Rees refused reform on the basis that it would tighten the Unionist vice on the province. Rees said: 'I do not see any circumstances in which extra representation of Northern Ireland with its history would be a means of bringing the peace that we all want.' Nor could he see more Ulster seats being granted 'in advance of an agreement on a system of Government commanding the most widespread acceptance.' All that has now gone in the hunt to save the Government's skin. By the end of the week the representation will have been increased probably in time for the election after next. There will be no proportional representation and there have been no meaningful assurances on how the boundaries will be redrawn. The extra seats will probably all go to Unionists. As Powell crowed last week: 'The Unionists will soon be the third element in the State . . . We are now the doyen of the minority parties.'

The Government's difficulty now is to find still more with which to keep the Unionists happy until the Autumn. Already the Homosexual Draft Order, to make homosexuality legal in the Province, has been delayed despite pressure from the European Court of Human Rights, as one sop to the Unionists' morals. Another is the decision, hinted at last week, to delay any move towards comprehensive education. One hope is that the construction of a gas pipeline from the mainland, which would cheapen energy prices, might mollify the Unionists. The major step, however, and the greatest act of government cynicism, would be for Callaghan to offer some regional councils with authority over housing, transport and such like back to the province without any constitutional guarantee of power sharing. Some Unionists, particularly in the grass roots, see this as a welcome transition towards the full return of Stormont and majority rule, others notably Enoch Powell and James Molyneaux, feel it is a sufficient reform in itself and favour full integration of Northern Ireland into the Mother of Parliaments. At the Official Unionist conference in October these divisions between the integrationists and the devolutionists threatened to split the party.

These internal divisions inside the Official Unionists make it difficult for the Conservatives to make a decisive bid for Unionist support. Moreover, the Tories are hampered by internal doubts themselves. The liberal wing of the party led by Francis Pym, William Whitelaw, the Young Conservatives and William Van Straubenzee, an Ireland Minister under Heath, all stand by the Tory decision to abandon Stormont in 1973 and argue that but for the General Election the power sharing experiment might have worked. This group look on Airey Neave, the current Northern Ireland shadow minister, with ill-disguised abhorrence.

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Neave has trouble hiding his ignorance of Irish affairs from Official Unionists, who have remained suspicious of Tories ever since Whitelaw's 'betrayal'. Neave, however, has been trying to win them round, denouncing socialism as inimical to Unionism and calling for tougher security. He has had some small success: the Unionists attended the Tory conference and Neave has stayed with Harry West, the leader of the Unionists.

But the major Tory ploy was made a year ago with Neave's announcement that 'power sharing is no longer practical politics', followed by Thatcher's visit to Belfast in the summer when she promised majority domination of regional administration. It was in response to the increasingly reckless nature of Neave's attempts to detach the Unionists from Labour and specifically the references to Stormont's return that Van Straubenzee last September publicly called a halt: 'I can say with some certainty that in a minority government situation the Conservative leadership would not be able to carry with them, whatever the consequences, enough of their own parliamentary party to secure a majority for the deal.' The speech caused some dissension in Tory ranks but it worked. If Neave had wanted to play the orange card, and he has that kind of temperament, the liberal Tories had prevented it. All this leaves the Unionists – despite their disunity – in command.

Powell will now employ two arguments with his Unionist colleagues. First that Labour's stance on Europe is closer to their own. And second that if the Unionists are to continue holding the balance of power they would be wise not to force a quick election which would undoubtedly end with a Tory landslide.

POLITICS
Tom Nairn

Grounds for optimism in the referendum result

What really happened in Scotland

ON REFERENDUM DAY 51.5 per cent of Scottish voters said 'Yes' to an elected Assembly, and 48.5 per cent said 'No'. The fact bears repeating, because it is the only one that really matters. Speculative tomes are already being prepared about the one-third of the electorate which did not vote, but these will not affect the action, which will be shaped mainly by the answers to three questions. Who won? How did they win? How will they exploit their victory?

Formally speaking, the 'Yes' campaign was an uneasy alliance of Nationalists, Labourites and Communists, with a still more uncertain camp-following of smaller groups like the SLP, the Liberals and the Tory 'Yes' men. A succession of Government potentates with loud-hailers appeared on a grassy hillock above and behind the army, urging the troops onwards in between the arrivals and departures of London planes.

Informally, things were different. What should have been the central campaigning front – the Labour Party – appeared to have as many malingerers as combatants. Its infantry sulked in the tents, and a fair number of them evaporated over to the other side altogether, joining Brian Wilson's lively Labour 'No' detachment. Hence the brunt fell, inevitably, upon the SNP's organisation. Scotland's bourgeois nationalist movement led Labour's Devolution campaign to a sort of victory.

The bourgeoisie itself, meanwhile, was encamped solidly on the 'No' side. Business opinion revealed itself as almost unanimously hostile. The Tories conducted a crusade of unrelenting Great-British chauvinist hysteria, spear-headed every morning by Victor Matthews's *Scottish Daily Express*. The Kirk – supposedly a bastion of Home Rule – crumbled apart under the strain and delivered no clear message to the National Conscience. After decades of pious blethering about 'More say in our own affairs' much of the Scottish middle class sidled furtively into the booths and placed its cross firmly in the 'No' square.

It was the working class that said 'Yes'. The ORC poll verdict on this was that two-thirds of the working-class vote supported an Assembly, and well over two-thirds of the youngest voters. This has been confirmed by many less systematic polling-day surveys and encounters as well as by MORI polls conducted for *Weekend World* and the *Scottish Daily Express*. The central, industrialised regions and the under-developed Highlands and Islands were for Scottish autonomy. It was small-town, farming Scotland – often depicted as the mainstay of Nationalism – which got cold feet.

This canny contingent was joined in its trek back to quietism by the pedlars of professional tartanry. Robin Hall, Kenneth McKellar, the Andersons, John Laurie and innumerable others signed up in the *Express*'s daily gallery of Stars Who Say No. No other single aspect of the referendum was more deeply gratifying to all sane Scotsmen and women. We always thought that kind of *kitsch* was a pseudo-virile symptom of bondage. Now we know.

'The major achievement of the No campaign', wrote the *Scotsman*'s editorialist bitterly the morning after, 'a strange alliance of big business and Socialist conservatism . . .was to attach to the Assembly all the sins which the public associate with central government. Truly were the sins of the father visited upon the unborn son.' Yet in spite of Labour's basic apathy-hostility, in spite of proletarian distrust of the SNP's middle-class image, there was still a majority for 'Yes'. The nebulous, dewy-eyed large majority evoked by Kilbrandon's Royal Commission on the Constitution (and many other surveys) vanished in the polarisation of the referendum battle. It was a self-indulgent Scottish myth, believed (for its own reasons) by London.

However, in terms of Scottish history the referendum was the first and only test of the collective political psyche there has ever been. 1707 took place long before mass democracy. The Scots grew into the English style of parliamentarism, and never evolved their own modern politics. They have never had to address themselves seriously to the question of their own separate political identity and destiny – until 1 March 1979. This first, faltering step produced an overall 33 per cent 'yes' to the modest affirmation of that identity – a small, actual miracle much more significant than the easy myth-victory which Mr Callaghan's Devolution project was betting on.

The same facts read utterly differently in these two perspectives. For the metropolitan view (which most Scots, and even Scots Nationalists, are conditioned to accept) this was a failure: the 'Yes' campaign as good as lost, failing to satisfy Cunningham's 40 per cent standard or yield a 'convincing' simple majority. Convincing to whom? For the separate, nationalist perspective what matters is simply that, at the first opportunity, 'Yes' was said to some kind of autonomy.

It would have been better said louder, perhaps. But the possibility of a bare majority is inseparable from any democratic exercise – least of all, one would have thought, from the operation of a system historically devoted to 'first past the post'. It is unfortunate when the crude fact of victory (and defeat) assumes this degree of importance. But there it is. All the 'Yes' movement has now to do is overcome that ingrained Scottish submissiveness to the metropolitan world-view, and persuade itself that it has really won. The boy-scout strain in Scots mentality urges it instinctively to believe it lost – the very quiescence that must have changed so many fantasy 'yes' votes into 'no' in the merciful solitude of the polling stations.

Not only was this a victory, it was victory doomed to almost certain sabotage and betrayal. The Assembly was being written off even as the results came into St Andrew's House. It would take a far larger miracle to navigate the Scotland Act through what is left of the Labour Government, amid all its other woes. Hence, the narrow majority seems likely to give nationalism what it needs most: a more focused sense of legitimate, contemporary grievance. We won, and *they* wouldn't give us the prize.

The way in which the majority was gained is equally important, and new. The SNP is now a bourgeois-nationalist party which has discovered – in the most painful and embarrassing fashion – that it has no bourgeoisie behind it. No movement was more addicted to a fudgy mythology of classlessness. But when it came to the actual battle, this vanished with the other fogs. What was disclosed in the sober grey light of referendum-day was a potential alliance of classes much like that of other nationalist movements: the workers, students and intellectuals, and some of the radicalisable lower-middle class.

The SNP is not nearly radical enough in outlook to exploit the real movement which produced the 'yes' majority. It has to move leagues leftwards, merely to catch up with what has happened. Can it become less purely nationalist, more popular-democratic in outlook, more republican in spirit? Many observers would be inclined to doubt it. But there can be no doubt this is the challenge written in Scottish circumstances, since the referendum. It has opened the way towards a radicalisation of the national movement; we do not yet know who will take that way, or when.

The projected Assembly will be a loss, of course. But given the manner of its loss, there may be more important compensations. A genuine left-wing nationalist movement in Scotland would be worth any number of Assemblies, and would in the long run make a more viable national democracy possible. The referendum's greatest achievement is that it caused Scottish politics to grow up many years in the space of one day.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA
Anthony Barnett

China's leaders are near to fighting each other

The warlords of Peking

NOW THAT THEY have gone to war, the leaders of China are too important to be left exclusively to Sinologists. On the face of it, an experienced and sober government would not dream of uniting behind an action as rash as an invasion of Vietnam, especially when their self-declared objective is to guide the most populous country on earth through an all-demanding period of economic growth. But the direction of China is not in the hands of such a group. Easily accessible evidence, in English, points to astonishing personal divisions at the top of the Peking hierarchy. Teng Hsiao-ping (pictured right) for example, was himself once 'remoulded' by one of his senior colleagues, Wang Tung-hsing, who is now his most serious opponent.

A photograph of the leadership, in April 1974, provides a panoramic start to the tale. (See opposite page.) The positional choreography of the various figures in this official picture is almost more precise than that of the dancing girls in the background. The shadowy male figures behind the front line, many of them generals, have played a major but still undeciphered part in the struggle for power and policy in China.

The occasion captured in the picture was Teng's send off to the United Nations in 1974, for a UN special session, at which Teng unveiled Mao's world view, the pretentiously entitled 'Three Worlds Theory'. Teng singled out the Soviet Union as being more 'vicious', 'perfidious', 'self-seeking and unscrupulous' than the United States; this at a time when Nixon and Kissinger were still in office. He cited as proof not only the invasion of Czechoslovakia, but also 'the war to dismember Pakistan'. There was no mention, of course, of Vietnam or Chile. The tragedy is that for all their mutual hatreds, the send-off party was probably united in agreement only on this international perspective.

Three groups can be distinguished in the photograph. First, that of Chou En-lai and Teng, whom Chou had designated to be his successor as Premier. Second, Chiang Ching's followers, who, though more numerous, are known as the 'Gang of Four'. Her position at the centre, but behind Chou and Deng, aptly catches her standing and ambition. Thirdly, there is what I will term 'the three', although they have other supporters too: Marshal Yeh Chien-ying, Wang Tung-hsing and Hua Kuofeng. They stand on the flanks. It is especially noticeable that Hua, today China's nominal number one, was right up against, but half a foot behind the shoulder of, Wang. He was, so to speak, virtually in Wang's pocket.

Chou died in January 1976. A riot in April that year, as Peking civil servants tried to honour his passing, enabled the Chairman, Mao Tse-tung, to purge Teng and thereby give his own ideological associates a chance to survive his imminent demise. He had sabotaged Chou's plans by outliving him.

But Mao's own followers were hardly a homogeneous group. The 'three' mounted a determined effort to prevent control falling to the hands of Mao's kin (his wife Chiang Ching and his nephew Mao Yuan-hsin, who was the Great Helmsman's liaison officer during the last months of his illness, with the key task of bearing his instructions). The crucial figure in outmanoeuvring what has come to be termed the 'Gang of Four', was Wang Tung-hsing (the one with Hua in his pocket).

Camera Press

AN INVALUABLE ACCOUNT of Wang has been published in the *China Quarterly*. Born of poor peasant stock he was recruited to be Mao's bodyguard during the Long March, and Mao taught him to read. A bright and dedicated cadre, he rose to become head of the Central Security Bureau, which reported directly to Mao, bypassing Party and State. It had its own regiment, approximately 10,000 strong, which watched over the entire leadership. In 1966, as a consequence of the so-called Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Wang apparently also gained control of the General Office of the Party Central Committee, a key nerve centre and documentation archive.

It was Wang who oversaw the detention and interrogation of 'capitalist roaders', including the 'remoulding' of Teng. It was he, too, who carried out the action against the 'Gang'. That he did so might seem surprising, since Chiang Ching regarded him with favour. But it seems that towards the end Mao Yuan-hsin (the nephew) used his own position to by-pass Wang's General Office – a fatal misjudgement.

At Mao Tse-tung's death, Wang Tung-hsin reported the Chairman's annointment of his successor-to-be. Of Hua, Mao apparently said: 'His performance is not bad, he is loyal and honest, he is not stupid'. (Sometimes a slap on the back comes close to feeling like a blow.) One of Hua's first actions was to send Mao Yuan-hsin away from the capital, to Shenyang, despite protests from Mao's widow. Then, in less than a month, Wang struck: the 'Gang' and their followers were purged.

It was not a one-man operation, however. Another major figure was involved – the octogenarian Yeh Chien-ying. Yeh is a veteran revolutionary, one of the organisers of the Canton uprising, who was in Moscow in 1930, travelled for the Comintern in Europe, got to the Kiangsi red base early, in 1931, and served as Chief of Staff in Chu Teh's First Army. Chou En-lai, who knew Yeh from the Whampoa Military Academy where they had both taught, was his political Commissar. In 1944, Yeh was Chief of Staff to Chu Teh for the whole military campaign out of Yenan. John Paton Davies, who headed an American mission there in October 1944, describes him as 'the most obviously alert, forthright, and outgiving of the big four . . . eager to discuss and learn'. The other three, of course, were Mao, Chu Teh and Chou En-lai.

Although Yeh was the first Communist Mayor of Peking, he was rapidly sent South to the Canton region where he was born, as one of the few senior leaders with fluent Cantonese. He did not flourish as a regional leader, apparently mis-handling the land-reform. By the late 1950s, however, with a Marshal's rank, he opened the Academy of Military Sciences, and apparently called for modernisation of the armed forces, including buying advanced equipment from abroad, while also opposing the indiscriminate importation of foreign experience, presumably Russian. The downfall of Army Chief of Staff Lo Jui Ching, who was the first leader to be purged during the Cultural Revolution (and whose cadaver will figure later), coincided with Yeh's swift ascent. Another friendship with Chou En-lai finally bore fruit.

Yeh was to provide the seniority which covered Wang Tung-hsing's double operation: first, the promotion of Hua as a 'compromise' candidate, to gather support among others in the politbureau and to isolate the radicals; and second, his purge of the radicals themselves. In a talk to the Central Committee in March 1977, Yeh stressed the 'Gang's' extensive support and credited Wang with the 'incredibly smooth' arrests. Wang interrupted to say that 'Yeh personally took charge'. 'Wang Tung-hsin is very modest' Yeh responded, and concluded that it was a 'joint success'. Thus the blood was spread around (real blood, too, Mao Yuan-hsin was shot). About 30 officials lost their posts.

The same March meeting decided upon Teng's comeback. Finance Minister Li Hsien-nien is presumed to have advocated his return forcefully, and to have been supported by Hsu Shih-yu. The latter was General of the southern region, who had protected Teng after 1976, and who is now apparently in overall charge of the invasion of Vietnam.

Why did the 'three' acceed to the pressure to let Teng back? Perhaps Yeh did so because he was a long-time supporter of modernisation, and was a Chou En-lai recruit like Teng himself. Hau possibly welcomed a counterbalance to Wang, who had made him king, and could so easily unmake him again. While Teng might have no love for Hua, whom he doubtless viewed as a slippery arrivist that had managed to worm his way into the Chairman's portrait, Teng would nonetheless prefer Hua to Wang. The appearance of a serious opponent to Wang thus gave Hua a chance to consolidate an independent position, while the other two slugged it out. For as a completely new arrival on the national scene, Hua needed time: he knew that if either Teng or Wang should gain a quick victory over the other, he would, in view of their greater experience, range of contacts and, not least, influence over bodies of armed men, in all likelihood become the winner's creature.

In little over a year, however, Teng did indeed move to confront Wang. The showdown became evident with the death of Lo

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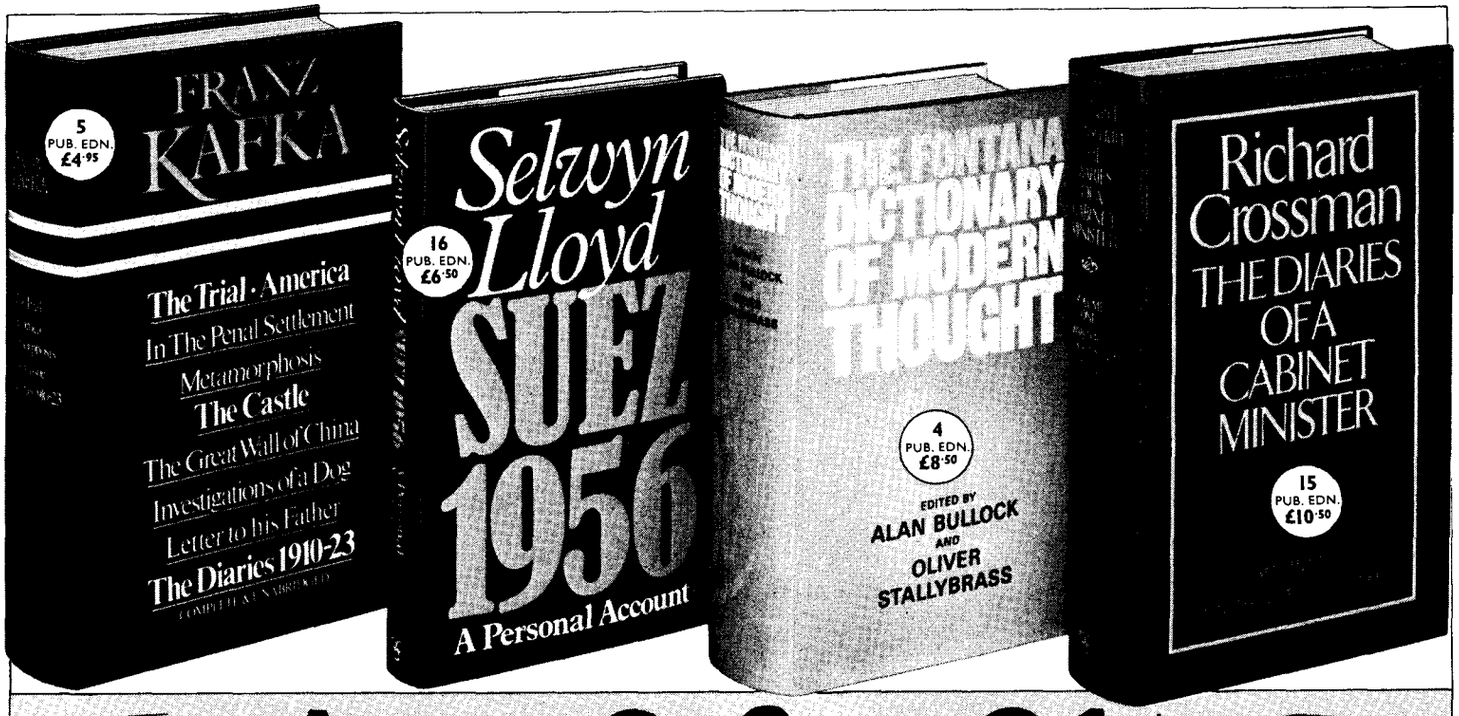

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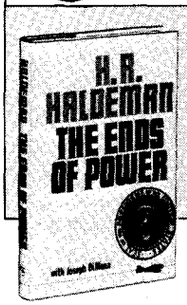

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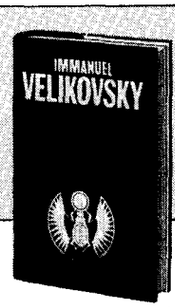

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Top: setting out for the UN, April 1974: From left to right: Li Hsien-nien, the economics supremo and Teng supporter; Yao Wen-yuan, one of the 'Gang'; Yeh Chien-ying, one of the 'Three'; Wang Hung-wen, one of the 'Gang' and their 'front man'; Teng Hsiao-ping; Chiao Kuan-hua, then Foreign Minister and supposedly a 'Gang' follower, now purged; Chaing Ching, now Mao's widow and a prisoner; Chen Hsi-lien, Peking Regional Commander, said to support the 'Three'; Chou En-lai; Chi Tung-hsing, a key Party organiser who perhaps supports the 'Three'; Wang Tung-hsing, with Hua Kuo-feng by his side. Below: the top five, in order of formal precedence: Hua Kuo-feng; Yeh Chian-ying, Teng Hsiao-ping, Li Hsien-nien and Wang Tung-hsing. Taken when Teng was rehabilitated. A new Vice-Chairman the once very powerful Chen Yun who fell from grace in 1958, has just been added, ranking nominally above Wang and below Li..

Jui-ching, the Chief-of-Staff who had been purged in 1965 and nominally rehabilitated in 1975. On 12 August 1978, Teng was scheduled to give the oration at Lo's funeral, before the massed ranks of the senior Peking functionaries. Two days beforehand, in a rare speech, Wang had staked out his own position. The two statements make a remarkable contrast still, as both remain tugging at the helm of China. Wang praised the 'Great *Proletarian* Cultural Revolution personally initiated and led by Chairman Mao' and attacked the 'three *bourgeois* headquarters headed respectively by Lui Shao-chi, Lin Piao and the Gang of Four' (my italics). In another speech two months earlier, Teng had attacked Lin Piao and the 'Gang', omitting all mention of Lui Shao-chi. This time, over Lo's body, he omitted any reference to the Cultural Revolution at all. Instead, he assailed the 'grave, unpardonable crimes of Lin Piao and the Gang of Four (which) victimised the *proletarian revolutionaires* of the older generation'. Lo has suffered a broken leg when he had been 'dragged out' by Red Guards, and with evident feeling Teng denounced the 'cruel persecution and torment' which Lo, Teng himself and many others had been forced to undergo. Wang, two days before, had insisted that : 'Only a handful of bad people genuinely participated in the conspiracies of Lin Piao and the Gang of Four in usurping Party and State leadership'. Teng countered, saying: 'Carry the struggle to expose and criticise Lin Piao and the Gang of Four through to the end'. With him on the platform as he made this demand were Yeh, who had, it seems, actually taken over Lo's job, and Wang, who had probably overseen Lo's arrest. By any definition 'the end' of Teng's struggle would include Yeh, Wang and even Chairman Hua Kuo-feng himself.

The contest between Wang and Teng did not reach a rapid conclusion. Instead there was a stalemate, which presumably makes Hua the victor for the time being. In November Teng managed to topple the Mayor of Peking which left him free to launch a wallposter campaign in which both Hua and Wang were criticised. But at the conclusion of the Central Committee plenum last December Wang, although weakened, retained a significant position. The Peking regional commander, Chen Hsi-lien, apparently a 'leftist', also, remained in place. The session 'seriously discussed' some aspects of the Cultural Revolution, and decided that the exposure and criticism of Lin Piao and the 'Gang of Four' had 'in the main been completed'.

The compromise was evidently an unstable one. Apart from internal policy there were disagreements over external affairs. Pressure came from at least two, connected, fronts: Indochina and the United States. In August the Cambodian Defence Minister Son Sen went to Peking, where Hua told him 'Your struggle is a just one . . . we support your struggles'. He was also given overt backing by two Generals. His contacts with Teng were apparently less cordial.

As part of its diplomatic preparations for the invasion of Cambodia Hanoi sought US recognition of Vietnam. They dropped all their demands for reconstruction aid, co-operated in finding and identifying the remains of US soldiers 'missing-in-action', and hoped to have an Embassy in Washington before the attack took place. But Washington played off Hanoi against the Chinese: it drew close to agreement with the Vietnamese in November, discussing details of recognition, then used this to extract concessions from Teng. Teng capitulated. In the race for American relations, Taiwan was relinquished. Not only was the US allowed to continue arming a part of China, but Teng told the US Senate: 'We no longer user the term "liberation of Taiwan".'

In between the December Central Committee session and Teng's Senate talk, the Vietnamese with their Cambodian allies had knocked out the Pol Pot State in Cambodia. Having 'lost' Taiwan, in part due to Hanoi's diplomacy, Teng now 'lost' Democratic Kampuchea as well. Perhaps only the military were unhappy, but that still meant almost half the Chinese leadership. Prior to 22 December last year (and the balance has not markedly changed since) the Party Politbureau included 4 Marshals, 6 Generals and an Admiral; that is, 11 military chiefs out of a total membership of 23. To salvage his position with this martial gerontocracy, Teng went to war. The 'three' may have been more enthusiastic than Teng over supporting Phnom Penh last summer. But they have remained remarkably silent over the invasion of Vietnam. Only Teng and, notably, his supporter Li Hsien-nien the economics expert, have publicly identified themselves with the war so far.

Whatever the military objectives, Teng's aim is evidently to consolidate his own position. Apparently, none of the others at the top was willing to risk his position by decisively opposing the adventure. Instead, they have all allowed China to blunder into a war with Vietnam – if for no other reason than to postpone a war amongst themselves.

The sources for the 'internal' exchanges of the Chinese leaders are two articles in China Quarterly*: 'The Rise of Wang Tung-hsing' by Paris Chang, March 1978; 'Hua Kuo-feng and the Arrest of the Gang of Four' by Andres Onate, September 1978.*

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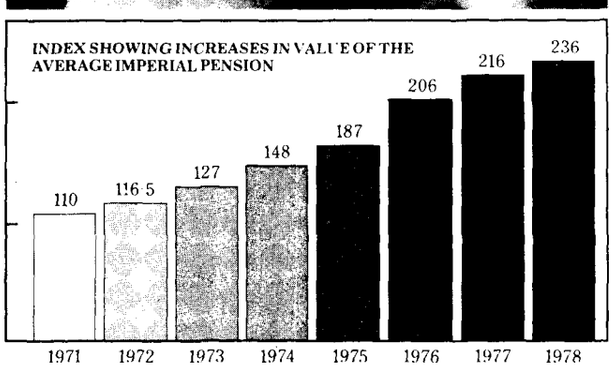

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Richard Neale, Pension Fund Manager of Imperial Group Limited. Left: The Stock Exchange.

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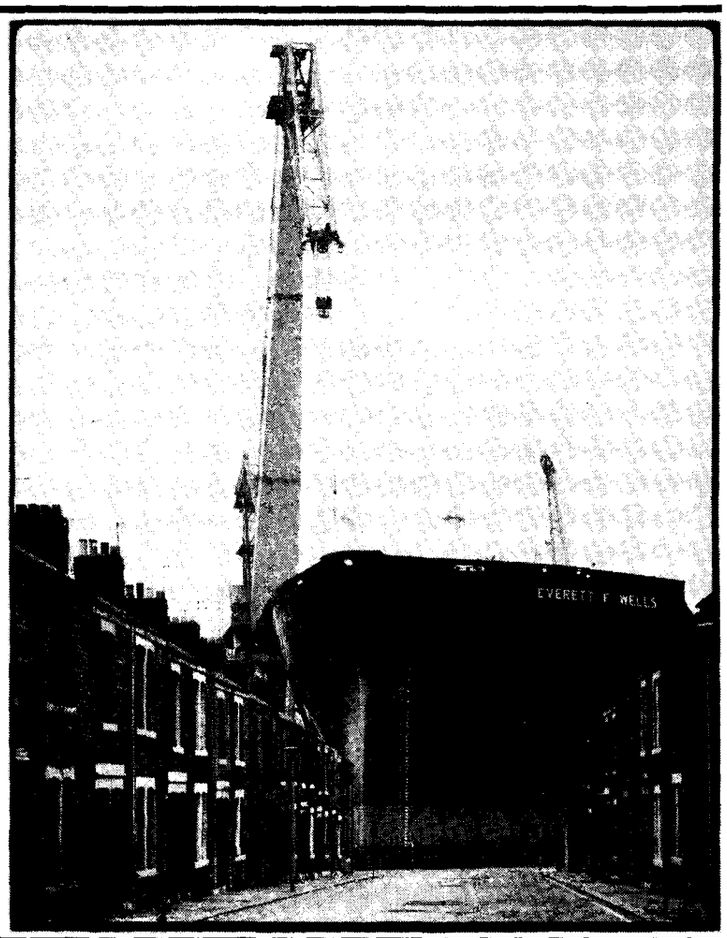
State Capitalism 1

British Shipbuilders and Rolls-Royce: two private sector failures. Is the state putting them right?

One of the many crosses premier Callaghan has to bear is being chairman of corporate Britain: a dozen or so large commercial organisations accounting for around a fifth of Britain's capital investment. Public ownership offers the *possibility of proper planning for the future.* But in many respects Britain's approach to public ownership has become a system of nationalised decline in which private sector failures, too important to be allowed to die, are taken over so a programme of retrenchment can begin: private capital is replaced by state capital. CHRISTOPHER HIRD *puts British Shipbuilders into its historical context* and PETER KIRKER looks at Rolls-Royce's design weaknesses.



G. Smith

ERIC MONTGOMERY used to be an official of the AUEW in the North-West. When he lost the vote to be re-elected he asked his old employers, the Vickers shipyard in Barrow in Furness, for his old job back: in the past it had always been understood that union officers would be re-employed when their period of office came to an end. However, Vickers refused. Montgomery, who, like many trades unionists had fought for the nationalisation of shipbuilding, thought that the decision might be reversed after July 1977 when the shipbuilding industry formally passed into public ownership. But Montgomery did not get his job back. As he says:

> Over the negotiating tables one of the most violently opposed to nationalisation was Richardson, the chairman of Vickers Shipbuilding Group; and there was I, one of the strongest advocates of ntionalisation. Now after nationalisation he's on the nationalisation board and I'm on the streets. *That's nationalisation 1977 style.**

This ironic little story is a poignant illustration of the view that nationalisation has more to do with capitalism than socialism. Whatever the aspirations of Labour governments and workers, the effective role of nationalisation in this country is to cope with the problems and serve the interests of the private sector. Unsurprisingly, the nationalised industries are frequently run by recruits from the private sector and, within some of the constraints imposed by an orderly rundown of the workforce, run on the same lines as private capital. Such an analysis does not ignore the fact that workers in state-owned industries may well be able to extract a better deal on redundancy or be more successful in defending their jobs than in the private sector: such experience only underlines the fact that workers in nationalised industries frequently have the same relationship with their employers as workers in private industry. Only their relative strength varies.

The experience of British Shipbuilders illustrates many of the features of British state capitalism. The Labour government has overpaid for an industry, large parts of which were bankrupt, at a time of acute crisis. The substantial cost and disruption of closing down up to a third of the merchant shipbuilding industry will now be borne by the government. Even if the Labour government had not been keen to nationalise the industry, it would have had to do it anyway: British defence needs its own shipbuilding capability and British companies need the security of a British merchant fleet. The upheaval caused by sudden and widespread closure – in the North East of England 30,000 men work in the shipyards – would have been politically unthinkable for a government of any colour. Similar considerations applied in the nationalisation of Rolls-Royce by the 1970-74 Tory government. The problems which face that company now are an object lesson in the dangers of having a policy of social ownership which is in fact inspired by a need to cope with the failures of capitalism. The same policies and attitudes which brought Rolls-Royce to its knees are still predominant in its board room.

The idea of nationalising shipbuilding has a long history in the labour movement and has been well fed by shipbuilding workers' experience of management neglect and indifference, with bosses closing down big yards overnight and ignoring essential investment. But, after being in Labour's 1948 programme, the idea dropped from view as the fifities and sixties ushered in some comparatively good years for the industry: although Britain's share of the world market was declining, the total market was expanding so rapidly that output remained more or less constant. The idea received a new impetus during the Tory 1970-74 government, when the Labour Party established its Industrial Policy Subcommittee, whose first chairman was John Chalmers of the boilermakers' union. This prepared a lot of ground for a labour government to take over the shipyards. Since Tony Benn succeeded Chalmers as Chairman, it naturally followed that when he became Industry Minister the takeover of the shipyards would go ahead – even though the proposal made only a fleeting appearance in the Labour party's manifesto.

IT COULD HARDLY HAVE BEEN a worse time. The world shipbuilding industry faced a prolonged period of massive overcapacity, to which British yards were particularly vulnerable. During the sixties and early seventies, world sea trade had trebled on the back of expanding economies. This had encouraged some very optimistic forecasts of what the future might hold and an unprecedented level of speculative shipbuilding. Ravi Tikkoo – one of Britain's flamboyant tanker operators – once said that ships were 'just floating real estate'; and banks were as happy to advance money on the basis of fancy profit projections for ship building as they were for property development.

The oil crisis and worldwide recession meant that shipping companies and their bankers paid (and are still paying) dearly for this. Tanker rates collapsed; spare tankers were laid up in the Norwegian fiords; yards which had specialised in tanker building saw their

*From a forthcoming book: *The workers' report on Vickers*, Pluto Press.

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order books shortening. It took some time for the problems of overcapacity to spread to other areas of shipping. And as Britain had not plunged so heavily as other countries into the tanker building industry, the years 1974-1976 were deceptively busy in British shipyards. This meant that when the companies came to be nationalised they were able to claim that they really were losing something. The government gave all the appearances of believing them. The two bodies embarked upon lengthy negotiations over the amount of compensation that was to be paid and the Nationalisation Bill had a difficult passage through the Commons. But all the time the government was trying to buy an industry of which large parts were bankrupt – as a look at its history might have suggested.

At the end of the war British shipyards produced about half the world's ships. Today they produce about three per cent. It is fashionable to blame this decline on the British workforce, which is compared unfavourably with that in Japan (now the world's largest shipbuilder). However, the problem is rather more complex than that. Japanese ascendancy has been based on the development of few yards as part of wider industrial groups: some of their yards are next door to their steel mills, for example. Their large yards have specialised in building a limited range of ships, particularly tankers. With high output, productivity has been high. By contrast, European yards have tended to be small and unspecialised. Where they *have* specialised (as in the case of the Appledore yard in North Devon), productivity has been as good as in Japan. German yards' share of the world market has fallen as sharply as Britain's. Most British shipbuilders took the attitude during the fifties that they should stay as jobbing shops, capable of making all sorts of ships. The comparatively large numbers of independent companies, frequently run by proud and autocratic families, made it more difficult for a single yard to develop a speciality – because of a fear of being vulnerable to market changes. As a result, some skills disappeared altogether from Britain. For instance, yards which once could fit out ocean-going liners almost completely missed out on the ferry building boom of the last fifteen years.

It was not a recipe for success. In the years before nationalisation British shipyards were only kept going by a steady flow of warship orders from the Ministry of Defence and an equally steady flow of government money, amounting to £300 million, intended to make merchant ships cheap. In 1972 a management consultants' report for the Department of Industry found that British yards had invested the £200 million in capital equipment suggested in the Geddes report six years earlier, but had not taken up the report's suggestion that a similar sized investment be made in production systems, to help them estimate their costs much better. Little had been done about exploring new markets.

THERE IS NOT MUCH in this history to suggest that shipbuilding was an industrial jewel worthy of much compensation. The naval yards – which employed about 20,000 of the 88,000 workers in the industry – were profitable largely due to orders from the British government; but the merchant yards were as good as broke. In 1977, British Shipbuilders took over about £1 billion worth of work in progress and about a year's worth of orders.

Part of British Builders' Polish order: needed to save a large section of the industry from immediate death

So far a total of £50 million has been paid out in compensation, but some negotiations have not been finished. When BS examined its newly acquired contracts in detail it was clear that many were unprofitable. Profits had been taken on some contracts that were not finished and many new contracts had been signed that could not hope to be profitable. It was necessary to write off over £110 million.

The state's inheritance at British Shipbuilders had a good historical precedent. Coal, gas, electricity and railways, all nationalised after the second world war, were in need of 'sustained programmes of heavy capital spending for replacement and modernisation'. Not all of this was the result of the ravages of war. Following re-nationalisation in 1967, British Steel's investment spending grew much faster than that in the economy as a whole and at a level much higher than could have been sustained by private industry.

These industries had to be kept going for a variety of strategic economic reasons. British Shipbuilders is no exception, as chairman Sir Anthony Griffin makes clear:

> As a densely populated and industrial island Britain is vitally dependent on seaborne trade. A sufficiently large proportion of this trade must be carried in British ships to prevent its control passing into the hands of the country's commercial competitors. At the same time an efficient navy is a necessary force in deterring any military threat . . .

Significantly, this view is also held by Mr Michael Grylls, the Tories' Josephite spokesman on shipbuilding. A similar view was held by Michael Heseltine about British Leyland before it was nationalised.

But within this framework – as has been the case with some other nationalised concerns – the main job of BS is to run down the industry. This is also the major task facing the British Steel Corporation and was the major achievement of the National Coal Board during the sixties. It is being undertaken by most shipbuilding industries in the world, which are almost all handsomely subsidised by their governments, Japan included.

THE CENTREPIECE of BS's programme of closures is its Corporate Plan, which was produced towards the end of last year, and on which Industry Minister Eric Varley is still deliberating. The forecast on which BS based its plan suggested that the over-capacity in non-tanker shipping could be eliminated by 1981 and so new building would start seriously in 1982. To cope with the years in between, the BS board favour the second of four options which it outlined: a reduction of a third in merchant ship capacity and a similar reduction in the size of the labour force, costing 12,300 jobs out of the 33,000 employed on this side of the business. The naval yards will be almost unscathed but there will be cutbacks in ship repair and engine building. The plan will only work if the government agrees to subsidise BS so that it can compete with overseas yards, and will involve payments of about £440 million from the Intervention Fund designed for such a purpose.

BS's corporate plan and the use of the Intervention Fund have now got caught up in the Whitehall and Brussels mill. The EEC takes a hawkish attitude on eliminating excess capacity in shipbuilding. As the Commission coyly puts it, out of 165,000 jobs in the industry, 75,000 could be affected by the restructuring. A further 30,000 people in related industries could also be made redundant. In Europe as a whole annual subsidies amount to about £400 million and the Commission is most reluctant to authorise payments from Britain's Intervention Fund until they see the Corporate Plan.

Both BS and the unions are starting to worry about what has happened to the Corporate Plan. On the whole the unions feel BS is better to deal with than the previous private owners, but nonetheless complain that the Corporate Plan was produced too quickly. They say that they cannot accept Option Two without more detailed work on the social and broader economic implications and the possibility of alternative work. Eric Varley and Gerald Kaufman are alleged to be looking at various alternative schemes, but the unions are beginning to wonder.

IN THE VACUUM that is being created by government delay, BS is apparently going ahead with Option Two anyway. The yard at Haverton Hill has been closed and BS is trying to shut down the dry dock at Falmouth. BS is already in a very bizarre situation. There is little doubt that it is over the cash limit set last year: the public spending White Paper published in January suggested that for 1978/79 BS might borrow £75 million more than planned. This implies a pre-interest loss nearer £70 million than the £45 million target. But the Government has not turned off the supply of money, so BS are in the position of a person who has exceeded the limit of his overdraft, but whose bank manager goes on lending him more money. The government has no choice but to lend unless it wants to bankrupt BS. Meanwhile, it is clearly extremely difficult for BS to fix next year's costs limit without any indication of the government's attitude to the Corporate Plan.

There is little prospect of BS diversifying quickly enough to provide employment for those laid off as the merchant side is run down: the naval building programme has already been brought forward to provide some work and 3,000 people have been switched to the Offshore division, after BS won the contract to build an offshore support vessel for BP. BS has just tendered for similar work from Shell, but Whitehall is buzzing with intensive lobbying as Roy Mason tries to ensure that this goes to Harland and Woolf. Diversifying into new areas takes time and also runs the risk of political opposition. The Engineering Employers Federation, for

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example, has started making fearsome noises about unfair competition from BS's latest venture into marine engineering.

The unions' case to minimise the number of redundancies has three main planks: first, if international agreement is reached on a plan to scrap old ships and replace them with new ones, the outlook will be much improved; second, if too much capacity is eliminated Britain will be badly placed to benefit from any upturn in the eighties; third, the social costs may be greater than the financial costs of subsidy.

This last argument is not one that appeals to civil servants at the Department of Industry at all. And as shipbuilding does not provide a social service it is hard to defend such a policy indefinitely. However, a socialist policy of shipbuilding might increase the resources available for research as well as new product development and diversification, while offering the support, where necessary, of the government's buying power so that in future years BS would not rely on the products of the past. But there is no point in pretending that the problems of years of decay and lack of innovation can be solved quickly.

The Conservatives' attitude seems fanciful in the extreme. It is clear that they favour a severe cutback in capacity and believe that ideally any subsidies should be given to ship owners so they can buy abroad, forcing British shipbuilding to become 'super efficient'. As overseas yards are sudsidised as well, spokesman Grylls admits this is 'a dangerous solution', but insists that 'we must put our own house in order'. Only someone who believes that the poor performance of the shipbuilding industry is caused by lazy workers and is not affected by volume of business, size and siting of yards and the level of investment, could imagine that 'putting the house in order' was a simple and speedy activity.

On dealing with the social impact of closing down yards, the Tories are even more fanciful. Mrs Thatcher is for giving large redundancy payments so that people can start up their own businesses and Grylls is for selling them their council houses so they can move away to new jobs. One of BS's biggest loss makers is Swan Hunter, employing 10,000 people in Tyne & Wear, an area of high unemployment. How realistic is it to believe that the local economy could cope with thousands of new businesses started by ex-shipbuilding workers, or that the local property market could support that level of house sales?

State Capitalism 2 – Rolls-Royce

ROLLS-ROYCE was absorbed into State Capitalism after Ted Heath reluctantly acknowledged that it was just too important a part of British engineering to be liquidated under the arcane rules of private capitalism. What is its present condition? For the problems of an aerospace company, confronted with world-wide boom, are very different from those of British Shipbuilders, where the inheritance is recession.

Misdirection, however is equally evident. Briefly, Rolls-Royce is so short of engineering capacity that it must sub-contract basic research work to America – the present deal being done with a firm which has close links to Rolls' deadliest competitor, the General Electric Corporation. Various glosses are put on the deal by Rolls' managers, but the truth is they are deeply uneasy about its implications. Rolls-Royce's predicament shows that eight years after nationalisation, little has been done to remedy the underlying problems which began to afflict British engineering (see Letters, p.327) in the pre-war period. Rhetoric which encourages the education system to turn out more engineers and more technologists is simply not matched to actual employment in the industrial sectors which the government itself owns.

Possibly, some of Rolls-Royce's difficulties arise from the government's idea that the right man to put in charge of the company was a merchant banker, Sir Kenneth Keith: he is, no doubt, learned about stock-exchange dealing, but doesn't seem very familiar with aerospace concerns.

The Belcan Corporation of Ohio is a large and famous consulting firm: it is the one whose boss, John Nixon, is just typing-up a deal under which Belcan will do some of Rolls-Royce's basic thinking. A worrying aspect of this is that Belcan uses General Electric computer time to back up its researches (GE, along with the other American giant, Pratt & Whitney, has about 80 per cent of the world market for civil-aviation engines). Sir Kenneth, taxed about the deal, helpfully provided me with information about Detroit Diesel/Allison, a quite different American firm, owned by General Motors, with which Rolls has routine agreements on sub-contracting. Taxed further, he said that 'detail' was not his job.

What Rolls have done is ask Belcan to build a model turbine to explore new variations in turbine-blade design. (Turbine blades, which run white-hot in a modern fan-jet, are a specially critical part of any successful engine.) Executives defend the deal on the grounds (a) that the ideas involved may not work out, (b) that 'leakage' of new idea always occurs sooner or later in aerospace, and (c) that in the particular technology under investigation, Britain possesses no knowledge not already available in America.

For all that, nobody likes the idea. Its necessity derives from a basic weakness. The curiosity of Rolls-Royce's relationship with the National Enterprise Board and the government is that whatever reluctance there may be about funding *specific* manufacturing commitments, there is no unwillingness to provide money (the sums are smaller) for open-ended research. But because specific programmes are under-financed, there is no skilled manpower to spare for research.

The upsurge in world demand for aero-engines, which was readily predictable several years ago, is now gaining momentum rapidly. And Rolls-Royce is scrabbling desperately to try and keep up with it. Even with full establishments – which none of them have – British aerospace companies have proportionately smaller staffs in research and advanced engineering than their American equivalents. Work has to be rushed, corners cut, and guesstimates used in place of estimates . . . reputedly, Rolls-Royce has to pay out £1.2 million *per week* under warranty and penalty clauses for engines that don't perform as promised.

From Miami, Eastern Airlines senior vice-president Paul Johnston told that 'we have had more than our fair share of troubles with the RB 211-22B' – a subject said to make his president, the ex-astronaut Frank Borman, thump tables. Eastern will be here in the summer to look at the 211-535, to which they are committed for their Boeing 757s, 'hoping for a much smoother run, as would be expected from a derivative engine.' Rolls chiefs are understandably anxious to have something ready to show them, and work to this end – interuppted by a strike at Barnoldswick – now verges on panic. When such crises arise, there are no facilities to spare for research-work: therefore, it must be sub-contracted to America.

Sir Kenneth Keith seems happy to see the trend accelerate: by 1981, he says, out-of-house contract work will have increased five-fold over 1977. The question, though, is how much of this will be done in the US, and will therefore nourish the American engineering system – which at national level is fiercely competing against Britain's. The British industry cannot match American standards of manufacturing productivity, so research and design is all there is to sell: if that becomes uncompetitive, the industry will die.

The problem is not confined to Rolls-Royce. Hawker-Siddeley, recently nationalised as the Kingston-on-Thames division of British Aerospace, is short of 130 engineers. But numbers are only part of the story, according to Cliff Bore, head of research:

> It takes ten years to make a thoroughly effective engineer . . . But an increasing proportion of the workforce just do not have this experience.

The problem is not so much short-supply from the universities, as the difficulty of persuading recruits to stay – turnover in some critical areas is worse than 30 per cent annually. Just as engineering is the lowest-paid of the professions, aerospace is the lowest-paid engineering sub-sector: arguably, if aerospace is subdivided in turn, research emerges as its worst-paid component. The process began in private-enterprise days, according to Bore, when Hawker-Siddeley operated an 'abrasive' pay policy.

> They travelled that road for a long time – with the result that we are now losing people in all directions. They go into computer work, service industries – anywhere.

But the trend has not been changed under nationalisation. Recently, a section leader on testing left Kingston to become a fitter at Heathrow: roughly equal pay, but superior prospects.

Briefly, nationalisation in aerospace and in shipbuilding has not corrected the fundamental flaws of either industry – produced by capitalist managers who under-valued research, over-valued easy-looking profits, and thereby lost their international position to capitialists who made better choices. Whitehall, dominated by the Treasury's concern with exchange-rates and other short-term concerns, hardly seems better-fitted.

But the news that Rolls-Royce – embedded into British mythology as a symbol of engineering originality – now has to do its thinking through American brains may help to alert people to the urgency of a new approach.

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Do we think only of ourselves?

Isn't it about time we started to think more of the animals around us? Time to put right the cruelties and sufferings to which we subject animals for the 'benefit' of the human race? Time we made governments aware that legislation is needed now to protect animals against wanton and avoidable cruelty? Time to put animals into politics!

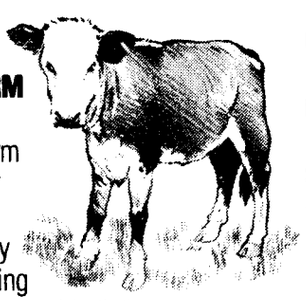
A large number of animal welfare and protection societies have come together in a single movement for the purpose of putting animals into politics. This unity is unique. We believe that there are six main areas of concern and these are as follows.

DOGS IN THE COMMUNITY

Where dogs are left to stray, unwanted, and where the majority remain unlicensed, without a properly regulated system of centralised or local control.

EXPORT OF LIVE FARM ANIMALS

Where farm animals suffer hardship and cruelty during transport both for overseas slaughter and further fattening.

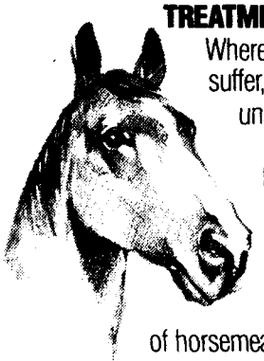


BLOOD SPORTS

Where successive public opinion polls have revealed strong public feeling against blood sports. That is, the hunting with hounds of otters, stags, hares and foxes, also live hare coursing.

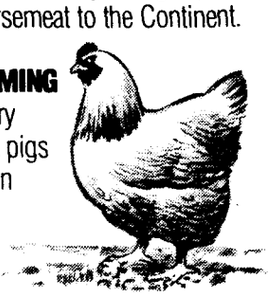
TREATMENT OF HORSES

Where horses suffer, particularly at unsupervised auction sales, and in transportation to the only six slaughterhouses in Britain for the growing export of horsemeat to the Continent.



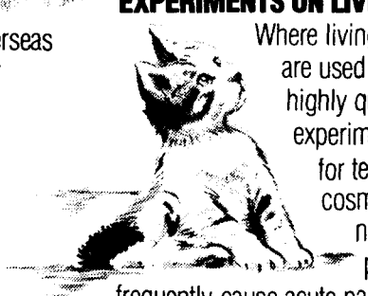
FACTORY FARMING

Where battery hens, calves and pigs are imprisoned in small cages, often for LIFE.



EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS

Where living animals are used for some highly questionable experiments and for testing cosmetics and other non-medical products which frequently cause acute pain and suffering.



Does YOUR MP know the truth?

Is YOUR MP aware of the facts? Does YOUR MP know what goes on in the laboratory, on the hunt or in the battery farm? Make sure that he does! Letter writing can be very effective, so write to your MP today outlining YOUR VIEWS. Whenever a political meeting is held ensure that you speak FOR Animals. Make contact with your local constituency associations asking for their support for the Campaign for animals. These actions will ensure that your MP knows the truth about animals in this Country!

Animals need your help.

Animals cannot help themselves, but we can, YOU CAN. We know that many thousands of people are looking to Parliament to introduce measures for the protection and welfare of animals in this Country. Only by Campaigning for political parliamentary legislation can the welfare of animals be protected.

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ARTS
John Pilger

The Arts Council's 'absolutely safe' political censorship

Not in front of the children

WHY WAS Michael Regan's mother horrified? Why couldn't the Queen be seen wearing a safety pin through her nose? Will the Royal Parks ever be the same again? Will Margaret Thatcher sue? Will the Johnnie Walker people sue? Why is Derek Boshier publishing a book that won't open? For the answers to these and other vital questions, read on:

On 5 February, Conrad Atkinson and Tony Rickaby, two artists with national reputations, were summoned to the Arts Council in Piccadilly, London. They were met by three full-time officers of the council: Joanna Drew, the Visual Arts Director, Andrew Dempsey, her deputy and Michael Regan, organiser of an exhibition called 'Lives', which was to open at the Serpentine Gallery this week. In an atmosphere of shoe-gazing embarrassment they were told that works by them, which touched on politics, Royalty and publicly documented scandal and which the Arts Council had accepted for inclusion in the exhibition, had been 'withdrawn'. No reasons were given, except that the council had taken legal advice.

Legal advice about what? The artists expressed bafflement; had not the works in question already been on public exhibition? Indeed, the Arts Council exhibited Conrad Atkinson's print at the Serpentine Gallery last year – the same print it now wished to 'withdraw' and which is on show at University College, London. And Tony Rickaby's watercolours had been exhibited at the Art Net Gallery, where they attracted such acclaim that the Arts Council was moved to buy six of them for £800; and these six paintings are among those it now refuses to show.

The artists asked the council officers to be more specific. 'Sorry', they were told, 'that's all we're allowed to tell you'. They asked why they had not been consulted. 'There was no need', was the reply. Could there be an appeal? No there could not. The artists were offered a whisky and the business of censorship, conducted in secrecy by a publicly-funded body, accountable to no one, was concluded.

Political censorship of the arts, of which this is perhaps the most significant and hamfisted example in recent years, is of course very British and therefore never admitted; censorship is an heretical, unspeakable word, especially if you happen to occupy one of the 20 seats on the Arts Council's general council and dispense and deny, via appointed panels and committees and a bureaucracy, £49 million in arts patronage – shortly to be increased to more than £61 million.

On 19 February the Arts Council's Press Officer issued the following statement:

> The Arts Council . . . made a collective and unanimous decision, after a full discussion, that it would be unwise to include in the Serpentine Exhibition one work by Mr Tony Rickaby and another by Mr Conrad Atkinson on the grounds that the exhibition of these works might expose the Council to legal action . . . the Council was not, as Mr Atkinson has claimed, 'banning' or 'black-listing' or exercising 'political censorship'. (The withdrawn work by Mr Atkinson was a print of which several other copies exist, and another of his works with a political subject is included in the exhibition.)
>
> The Council was merely exercising its inescapable editorial duty as the body ultimately responsible for this exhibition. In this situation the council regards its responsibility as not dissimilar from that of the editor of a newspaper or journal.

As it happened, the Arts Council never asked their solicitors to calculate the legal risks of exhibiting the works, based on a thorough investigation of their factual background, nor did they enquire how the exhibits might be modified in order to reduce any risks – as any newspaper editor worth his salt would ask his lawyers. Far from 'exercising its inescapable editorial duty', as the handout claims, the Arts Council asked their legal advisers, in effect, if the works were 'absolutely safe': thus using lawyers, to whom almost nothing is 'absolutely safe', as a cover for abdicating its so-called editorial duty. The council wanted to censor the works of Rickaby and Atkinson, for political reasons, and they did not want to be seen doing it.

Tony Rickaby's paintings are of the facades of buildings in London: no more than that. These buildings accommodate organisations which include the Anglo-Rhodesian Society, Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers' and Listeners' Association, the Economic Union Movement, Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, Festival of Light, the Movement for True Industrial Democracy, the National Front, the Monarchist League, the Confederation of British Industry and the Conservative Party. Without an official hint as to his sins, Tony Rickaby guessed that the title of his exhibit, 'Fascade', might be the cause. Brimming with compromise, Rickaby offered to change it to 'Fronts' or, if that was unacceptable, to let it go without a title. But there was no discussion; it was 'too late', he was told; the lot was out.

PETER COOK, whose gallery, the Art Net, exhibited Rickaby's paintings, describes the Arts Council's recourse to legal advice as 'a ridiculous pretence'. 'The affair says everything about the council's structure and its automatic deference to the establishment', he said. Hugh Jenkins, former Minister of the Arts, has seen Conrad Atkinson's exhibit and says the Arts Council's legal fears, if such fears exist at all, are 'simply absurd'. The subject of Atkinson's print and catalogue text is perhaps the most enduring and documented scandal in post-war Britain: the marketing by the Distillers company of thalidomide and the struggle to win compensation for children deformed by the drug. It is a collage, which combines the original 'Distaval' advertisement, proclaiming thalidomide's 'safety', with an array of Distillers' booze products; and there is a chronicle of 20 years' of campaigning by the parents and journalists and of the corresponding rise in Distillers' profits. It is a statement of facts, published and corroborated many times over.

The catalogue text is in the form of a polemic, in which the artist's views are similar to those expressed publicly, in print, in Parliament, in one form or another, over the years. In particular, Atkinson criticised the Royal Family for ignoring appeals to withdraw the Royal Warrant from Distillers' products. He wrote this:

> If the Royal Family is of any use whatever it must be as a symbol of morality in our state. Perhaps it is, in lending its name to such an intrinsically and fundamentally unmoral organisation as the multinational Distillers Company symbolising our morality; their main purpose is to make profits. Thus the monarchy becomes nothing more than a legitimising, merchandising force in the armory of monopoly capitalism.
>
> As such the Royal Family and their advisers have shown a deplorable lack of taste and compassion and one could be forgiven for being cynical about the non-disclosure of the Royal shareholdings . . .

The banning of Conrad Atkinson's work, in particular, involves a wider issue that goes far beyond the internecine warfare endemic in the arts world. In these days of confusion, with people trying to come to terms with unemployment, an unstuck economy, political powerlessness, technological 'advance' etc, much of the arts continue to reflect the cultural unwillingness and inability to involve itself in the problems of the real world. The Arts Council, with its built-in bias toward the traditional and infrequent bursts of courage, merely shores up this elitism and encourages the pessimistic view that art, in particular, can change nothing.

Conrad Atkinson is one of the English pioneers of a style that owes as much to the photo-journalist and the documentary maker as it does to the artist. In other words, he is an effective and eloquent troublemaker who, wrote Richard Cork in the *Evening Standard*

> does not allow us to forget, to be side-tracked by aesthetics . . . instead he nags and unsettles the conscience by presenting the inescapable flaws in our society as the first and only real priority undiluted by artistic diversions.

Atkinson's constant theme is the balance between life and death and profits and, not unlike a campaigning reporter, he places much importance on public 'feedback' and effect. He is best remembered for his ICA exhibition, 'Strike', which dealt with the long struggle of shockingly underpaid workers at Brannan's factory at Cleator Moor, Cumbria, where he was born; and the exhibition is credited with the 100 per cent unionising of a department at Brannan's London factory.

He has campaigned, through his work on behalf of lung-diseased men who worked the iron-ore pits of Cumbria, where his grandfather was a miner. After his own investigation at a council estate where people were exposed to asbestos dust, he used the facts and a piece of lethal blue asbestos to make the case for compensating asbestos sufferers. Following another exhibition, 'Work, Wages and Prices', in which he used videos, slides, sound and blow-ups of poverty payslips and stock exchange listings, action groups in north London borrowed his work as ammunition in their fight against property developers. His banned thalidomide exhibit is in keeping with all this; it is both art and compelling *information* – the red meat of the censor.

Of course, the censor in this case is inspired as much by the Cock-Up Theory and farce, as by any deep consideration of the political challenge of the artist's work. Derek Boshier, who spent a year travelling the country for the Arts Council, selecting works for the exhibition, said, 'The trouble really began when

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Michael Regan, the exhibition organiser, took home the catalogue texts and his mother caught sight of Conrad Atkinson's views on Royalty. Regan told me his mother was *absolutely horrified*, and from then on the exhibit was doomed. It was soon brought to the attention of the general council, and the general council is obsessed with not offending Royalty. A punk poster bit the dust because it showed the Queen with a safety pin through her nose, and there was a lot of tut-tutting concern about Atkinson's anti-Royalist work hanging in the Serpentine gallery . . . in a Royal Park!'

Last week, Derek Boshier was called to a meeting with the Visual Arts Director, Joanna Drew, and told that the exhibition would be moved to the Hayward Gallery where 'it will not occasion comment'. Boshier was told that the Arts Council's lease of the Serpentine Gallery from the Department of the Environment stipulated that 'work cannot be shown if it entertains doubts about its display in a public place to any reasonable person'.

THE SERPENTINE is a highly accessible gallery whose free exhibitions are seen by people who otherwise might never visit an art gallery. 'This public exposure to powerful art worried the council', said Boshier. 'They had got rid of the Atkinson and Rickaby works by using lawyers, but the exhibit that concerned them most could not be banned under the same cover.' This exhibit, called 'Rape', is the work of Margaret Harrison and shows a variety of implements used in rape; it also gives statistical evidence that the convictions handed down by judges often depends on the 'respectability', or class, of the rapist. It is a highly effective piece of visual art that demystifies rape. When it was exhibited at the Battersea Arts Centre, local teachers, obviously not in tune with the timorous views of the Arts Council, brought parties of schoolchildren to see it and to discuss the true nature of rape. (So riled is Boshier that he is currently mounting his own 'censorship exhibition', which will include a book entitled, 'The Arts Council's Position on Censorship – a Full Explanation'. The book does not open.)

Professor Lawrence Gowing, a member of the general council and head of the Slade school of Fine Art at University College (where the Atkinson print hangs, unbanned and unprosecuted) provided an instructive glimpse of the council meeting that 'withdrew' the two exhibits. 'I saved the exhibition!' said Professor Gowing. 'Influential and powerful voices on the council wanted to censor several works, but I stopped them. If I hadn't been able to stop them, I would have resigned. But you must understand that there was no censorship of the Atkinson and Rickaby works. The council just didn't want to take a chance.'

When I asked Professor Gowing if he had considered that the banning of an exhibit for so-called legal reasons might be an expedient method of censorship. He replied that he and other council members had not seriously questioned the legal advice. 'In legal matters', he said, 'I'm out of my depth.'

The same might be said of Roy Shaw, the Arts Council's secretary-general, who refuses to deviate from the handout and has turned down requests to appear on both BBC and ITV programmes 'because the artists are taking legal action against us and the whole thing is sub-judice'. This is nonsense. Rickaby and Atkinson merely instructed a solicitor to send a letter which said they were disturbed 'by the lack of proper explanation for this unilateral action' and added the standard warning about proceedings if there was no reply. There has been no notification of legal action and none is being taken.

Tony Rickaby says his paintings, which are owned by the Arts Council, will be put in store and almost certainly never seen again. Conrad Atkinson, a member of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Visual Arts and an author of the Party's document, 'The Arts and the People', which calls for an accountable, democratic system of arts patronage, is under no illusions about his future. 'I will now of course be carefully watched by the Arts Council', he said, 'as its finger is connected to the fellowships, galleries and publications'.

The present chairman of the Arts Council is Kenneth Robinson, a former Labour Minister of Health, who has dismissed Labour's Manifesto promise to reform the Arts Council as an 'epithet' and has commented that advocates of change 'cannot have thought seriously about the subject'. According to Hugh Jenkins, such disdain is nothing new; Lords Goodman and Gibson, when chairmen of the council, successfully persuaded Sir Harold Wilson not to implement Labour Party policy.

In a book to be published this month*, Jenkins argues that the Arts Council is technically irresponsible in the sense that the Minister cannot be asked questions about the artistic decisions of the council. 'I want to keep it that way', he said, 'and the only way of doing so is to ensure that the flow of influence comes up from the artist and his associated community associations and not down from the Government and it appointees.

'Those who confuse elitism with excellence and pretend that the one is the other fall back on the difficulty of constructing a balanced council. There is no insuperable difficulty. The majority on the council and the advisory panels should be elected by the arts world at large: the theatrical managements, trades unions, local authority arts councils and regional associations. At present the finest arts patronage organisation in the world is jellied in oligarchic aspic.'

John Pilger is a special writer on the Daily Mirror.
**The Culture Gap,* published by Marion Boyars, £7.95.

AMERICA
Claudia Wright

How champagne and caviar won kind words from the press

The secret of the Shah's supporters

HIS FORMER EXCELLENCY, Ardeshir Zahedi, ambassador to the United States of the Shah of Iran, was a plain-looking man, physically distinguishable only by considerable body hair which for four months of the year he used to expose through unbuttoned shirts.

'He is rapidly balding', a well-known journalist wrote in a profile for the *Washington Post*, 'and has an odd space between his teeth, but his personality is so vivid that he seems better looking as he talks.' 'God', another experienced lady remarked, 'that guy could charm the pants off you if you weren't careful.' According to the social chronicles of his tenure in Washington, the ladies were not.

But among the many notable ladies to lose their pants, none was more notable than the *grande dame* of the capital herself, the *Washington Post*. Even as she fought to expose the President of the United States in petty theft, lies and conspiracy, she was exposing herself to the representative of the Shah, and in return for his favours, printing what it suited him to tell.

Ardeshir Zahedi was twice the Shah's ambassador to Washington: in the late 1950s when Eisenhower was President, and from 1973. His father was one of the chief plotters of the CIA-assisted *coup* of 1953, which brought the Shah back from exile, and subsequently one of the founders of SAVAK. Ardeshir was at one time married to the Shah's daughter (they divorced in 1964) and in between his Washington posts, he served as the Pahlavi court's Foreign Minister.

When he finally quit the embassy in February, he emptied his office of virtually all its files. But according to 'The Ear', gossip column of Washington's afternoon paper, the *Star*, three lists were left behind, detailing the recipients of gifts from the ambassador. One listed media and press people, a second local socialites, and a third members of Congress.

On 14 February, the *Washington Post* revealed part of what had been said at a press conference given by the new representative at the embassy, Shahriar Rouhani: 'Obviously the friendships (of Zahedi and Americans) did go beyond caviar and champagnes', he said, 'but it is not our will to make trouble, to make enemies'. On 22 February Rouhani told a young congressman Michael Barnes, that Zahedi had made cash and other gifts to favoured journalists and congressional notables, that their names were known to the embassy authorities, but that he would not reveal them.

A week later, Rouhani told a *New York Times* reporter that Zahedi had operated a secret fund of $25,000 a month. Again no names. Then at a press conference on 1 March, he announced that the incriminating documents had been sent to Teheran.

The press reported what was said with considerable reticence, emphasising the possibility of congressional bribe-taking, with hardly a mention of the involvement of the press itself. An assistant to congressman Barnes, who also attended the 22 February meeting with Rouhani at the embassy, has told me the Iranian spokesman said at the time that the bribery was 'widespread and substantial' and 'more serious among the media than among members of Congress and government officials'.

I asked officials at the embassy to identify the names. Three officials confirm that Zahedi had listed at least eight well-known Washington journalists among the gift-takers. They are Joseph Kraft, a nationally syndicated columnist who appears in the *Post*; Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, also syndicated columnists appearing in the *Post*; Nancy Collins, until three weeks ago a general reporter for the *Post*; Joseph Alsop, now retired and a former columnist for the *New York Times*;

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Carl Rowan, a syndicated columnist for the *Star*; Betty Beale, a society-page columnist for the *Star*; and Joy Billington, a *Star* reporter.

Of this group none has visited Iran as often nor written as much on the Shah and his policies as Joseph Kraft of the *Post*. Except for a gap in 1977, he has reported from Tehran every year since 1974. Last year, as opposition to the Shah mounted, Kraft wrote opinion pieces on Iran no less than nine times. Asked whether he had received any gifts for free trips from ambassador Zahedi or the Shah, Kraft told me angrily that he had not.

Asked the same question, Rowland Evans said coldly that he had only visited Iran once in 1973: 'I have never received a nickel of free expenses from any company, country, goverment, politician or foundation. I have had gifts at Christmas-time. (Zahedi) sends a great many jars of caviar. I have had caviar for many years, but I suppose one hundred other reporters in town received it too.' Later in the conversation he corrected himself: 'Probably three hundred reporters in Washington'.

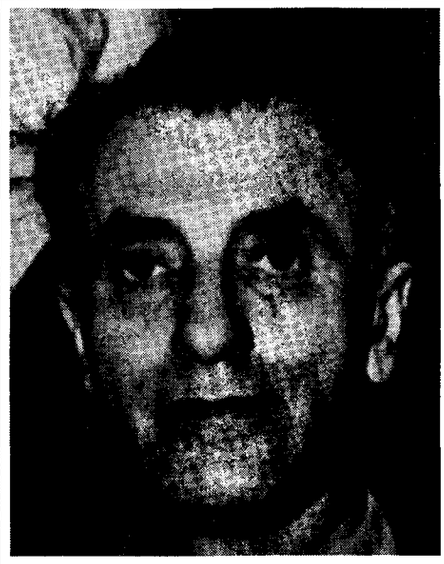
'I will tell you the truth' he promised. 'It is impossible not to receive gifts from embassies. I received some Egyptian wine. Kuwait too (sent something). I took it all back in my car. I deposited it outside each embassy. It took me a lot of work and trouble.' Why then, he was asked, did he not return the caviar? 'Perhaps I should have. It was hardly worth it for a gift of five or six dollars.'

Novak, Collins, Alsop, Rowan and Billington were unavailable to comment or answer questions. Beale admitted receiving gifts. She writes a column reporting on celebrity parties, mainly of Washington politicians and diplomats, and this appears twice a week in the *Star*, with a third column syndicated widely. She is not a political analyst, but she regularly embroiders her copy with quoted remarks from her political friends. She said that she has known Zahedi for twenty years. 'I've received nothing more than others received. I've received caviar and champagne a couple of times a year. Those small tins of caviar. These stories of gifts have been greatly exaggerated'.

Reporting parties is a more serious form of journalism in Washington than in most places, for parties here are more serious business than usual. Zahedi, who sometimes gave three parties a day, perfected his entertainments to gain maximum publicity and favour from the press. In response to the invitations, for example, *Post* journalists Sally Quinn, Henry Mitchell and freelance, Connecticut Walker, published three profiles of the man in as many years. On 10 November, 1978, in the midst of the Shah's final crisis Mitchell wrote:

> Recently in Iran there has been a new liberalisation. Press censorship for example was lifted. Pundits queried whether such loosening of control would lead to riots or protests against the Shah . . . 'He thought he could do that,' Zahedi said. 'He was thinking that people are more educated now and economically better off. I know that the Shah's hope and dream has always been – a democratic state. Though of course it takes time

Mr Mitchell was awarded two gifts, and although not identified by embassy sources as on Zahedi's media list, he admitted that they had been sent – and that he returned them: 'The embassy telephoned to make sure there was somebody at home because they didn't want to drop the caviar on the doorstep. I had to write a note saying I appreciated his thoughtfulness but it made me feel easier if there were no gifts.'



Camera Press

"Zahedi so successfully had a stranglehold on people's emotions, people genuinely believed, to my horror, that he was a dear, good friend. Everybody knows he gave the press gifts, but when people talk about it now they feel a sense of outrage."
Diane McLellan, 'Ear' Column, The Star.

At the office of the *Post*'s Managing Editor, the policy on gifts is issued with crisp assurance: 'No reporter at the *Post* is allowed to receive a gift. They must notify the management and what the management says is that they should return it with a thank-you note. If they are food hampers of perishable gifts, they should be sent to a charitable organisation chosen by the person who received it.' The *Star* management is even more precise. According to its representative: 'If a journalist accepts a $12 bottle of champagne, he is compromised.'

But what about the syndicated journalists, those who appear regularly in the papers but who are not employees as such? The *Post* says there are 'no household rules for syndicated journalists'. The *Star*: 'They are independent contributors. We don't have the same degree of control over them – we only have the right not to use them. We expect a syndicated columnist to declare his personal interests.'

ACCORDING TO BOTH recipients and Iranians, Zahedi's most common gifts were magnums of Dom Perignon and tins of Beluga caviar. In Washington, the champagne costs at least $35. One pound of the special caviar known as 'the Pearls of the Caspian' sells for $217.50, while kilo tins, which were favoured for friends' doorsteps, are worth about $450. Less common, but widely rumoured, were the gifts of Iranian silk rugs. No-one has owned up to receiving those.

While it is faintly conceivable that over the past six years Zahedi's favourite newspapermen used to jump doggedly into their automobiles with their gifts and leave them decomposing on Embassy Row, it has been their unflagging support of the Shah in what they printed for all those years which makes the telling point. The Pearls of the Caspian cast a spell which wasn't returned with the tin.

A survey of national press coverage of Iran during 1978, appearing in the February issue of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, reported a virtually uniform pattern of support for the Shah and his version of events throughout the American Press: 'By and large the American news media routinely have characterised the Iranian conflict as the work of turbaned religious zealots in league with opportunistic Marxists, rather than – as they might have – the reaction of people outraged by a repressive regime. By doing so the press has helped to misinform American public opinion and narrow the range of debate.'

Carl Rowan, one of the most respectable names to be identified on Zahedi's list of gift-takers, is a former director of the US Information Agency and before that an information specialist for the State Department. Will the Shah, he asked on 26 October, 'be energetic enough and tough enough to beat down one more challenge from the Soviets, the religious reactionaries and the advocates of special privilege?'

Kraft, on the other hand, having made his column in the *Post* a sure platform for the Shah, decided to toss him over in the regime's final days. In 1974 Kraft had written: 'I was impressed, as I had been in several other meetings, by the Shah's extraordinary blend of broad views and detailed knowledge . . . (he) is one of the most sagacious and experienced rulers in the world.' In case readers were tempted to read too much into the assassinations of Americans and other opposition activity in Iran in 1976 – and in case Congress got too uneasy about selling the Shah F-16 fighters – Kraft had his piece of advice: 'The status quo in most of the Arabic world looks relatively solid. The most likely tendency is toward a slowing down on modernisation thanks to the drag of the traditionalists. Which means that there is not all that much to worry about . . .'

As the *Post's* news coverage of Iran sharply increased – it jumped out of insignificance during the OPEC oil embargo of 1973 and then doubled between 1974 and 1978 – the focus changed dramatically. In 1972 one news story in five dealt with the Shah's political opposition, mainly student protests and the executions of guerrillas. By 1977, however, the focus had shifted to US arms sales and oil price and supply problems.

One columnist, Jack Anderson, did manage to sound warnings that the Shah was not as reliable as many thought, but Evans and Novak added to the litany of anti-Sovietism.

In May 1977, a reporter identified as having a father-in-law who was the Shah's Deputy Minister of Information, treated the *Post's* readers to their first tour of a SAVAK prison in Tehran, accompanied by the deputy director of the secret police and a retired army general. A couple of prisoners, man and wife, were interviewed in a room 'with the usual signs of Persian hospitality', and we were told by the reporter that down 'bright empty yellow corridors' lived married couples, paying for their mistakes but not too badly off.''What the Shah is attempting', concluded this news analysis, 'may lie not beyond the capacity of his vision but beyond the character of his people.' Two pots of Beluga straight to the doorstep.

That for the moment is all there is to the tale of the Pearls of the Caspian. The final irony is that a good many virtuous citizens of the fourth estate, notably those occupying the columns of the *Post*, are now bound no less closely to the new regime than they were to the old, and for nothing more than a few pots of choice fish eggs.

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LABOUR
Anna Coote

Quotas, goals and timetables may be the only answer

The next step to equality?

THIS WEEK SHOULD SEE the first formal step by the British trade union movement towards recognising the need for 'affirmative action' to achieve equal rights. The Americans latched on to the idea ten years ago, but it has taken us time to discover that our new Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts are not strong enough to shift the basic patterns of inequality. Now the laws have had three years to exhibit their impotence and a resolution to the TUC Women Workers Conference on 8 and 9 March, calling for 'positive discrimination' (which amounts to the same thing), is likely to be carried. At a special meeting convened by the TUC last month, to look at ways of amending the Sex Discrimination Act, delegates were almost unanimous in the view that the only hope for real change lay with affirmative action.

As yet there is not one company in Britain which operates an affirmative action programme (a striking contrast with the United States, where every employing organisation which holds a government contract has to have one). There are a few local authorities – notably the London borough of Camden – which boast an 'Equal Opportunities Policy' but that is quite a different matter, being merely a statement of intent. Ever since 1968, government contracts have included a race equality clause, but that simply obliges the contractor not to disobey the Race Relations Act (hardly an arduous task). A proposal that firms tendering for government contracts should have their employment policies inspected for signs of racial discrimination was met with righteous indignation from the CBI last week: it was appalling, Sir John Methven said, that the government should attempt to use its 'purchasing power to enforce policies not connected with the object of its contracts'.

WHAT THE EMBRYONIC CAMPAIGN in Britain badly needs is information. It was clear from last month's TUC meeting that while most delegates wanted positive action to get more women into so-called 'men's jobs', few had a very clear idea of what an affirmative action programme might entail.

Sadie Robarts, a London barrister and feminist, spent last year studying affirmative action in the States and is now producing a book for the English market. She describes the 'settlement agreement' signed by the Greyhound bus company after it had been taken to court by the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission for imposing an unnecessary height requirement (trainees had to be at least 5′ 7″) and refusing to hire women as drivers. The agreement runs to 25 pages with more than 100 pages of appendices. It covers 'all past, present, future and potential female applicants to the company' and sets out in minute detail the steps which Greyhound will take to achieve greater equality. These include making special efforts to project a company image which will attract female applicants; advertising posts in publications 'whose readership is predominantly female'; telling each female trainee who doesn't make the grade 'of all respects in which her performance is deficient', giving her a chance to improve, then re-assessing her; holding annual seminars for staff involved in recruitment and training and evaluating their 'affirmative action efforts'; notifying the EEOC of each applicant who is turned down, with full reasons; reserving places in the Driver Training School until 25 per cent are filled by suitably qualified females; monitoring, assessing and adjusting the programme . . . and so on. It is intriguing to imagine British Rail, or any provincial bus company in this country, signing a similar kind of agreement.

If Greyhound's programme sounds like a fantasy to British ears, it is mild compared with that agreed by the Bank of America. As Sadie Robarts explains, the case against the Bank was launched in March 1971 by three women employed in the International Division. It then mushroomed as more complaints flowed in, until 1973 when the EEOC intervened and the suits were consolidated into an action on behalf of 'all past and present women employees and applicants for employment of the Bank and its subsidiaries' (an estimated total of 64,000 beneficiaries). The Bank didn't have a leg to stand on: nearly three quarters of its workforce was female, but women occupied only 31 per cent of jobs at officer level and only five out of 805 jobs (0.7 per cent) at vice presidential level.

The Bank agreed to a settlement which offered three forms of relief. The named plaintiffs in the suit were paid sums of money reflecting their position and length of service; goals and timetables were set for getting women into certain grades of work; and four trusts were established to meet the training needs of different groups of female employees, with funds totalling $3,750,000. The philosophy behind the agreement was that in order to effect change, women should not be given compensation for past discrimination, but financial incentives to improve their position in future.

THE GOALS SET by the Bank of America's programme were modest enough: by 1978 women were to hold 40 per cent of jobs at officer level and 5.1 per cent at vice presidential level and above. The former was exceeded – women held 43 per cent of officers' jobs by 1977, although all but a quarter were in the lower officer grades. Barely half the latter goal was achieved, despite the fact that it aimed for only 65 top jobs for women among 1,268. Not until 1977 did it come to light that the Bank had secretly continued to favour top male executives by sponsoring their membership of expensive clubs which discriminated against women. This meant, of course, that aspiring female executives were excluded from social and business functions which were crucial to the careers of their male colleagues. Only when the US Treasury threatened a 'finding of non-compliance with the affirmative action requirements' (which could lead to a withdrawal of contracts) did the Bank stop paying the subs. Robarts discovered, too, that the Bank still issued stock options in strictest secrecy to senior executives: no-one could find out whether women had been getting fewer of these valuable perks than men.

IF WE ARE TO EMBARK on affirmative action in Britain, the American experience should help us to set off in the right direction. But there are a number of important ingredients in the US recipe which are missing here.

The US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission is a lot larger and livelier than our own poor EOC. It is possible in the States to bring a 'class action' on behalf of a group of employees, while in Britain the laws only allow individual complaints.

The idea that employers who discriminate against women or blacks should lose government contracts is now well-established in the States: federal contracts have been withdrawn for this reason in only 13 cases so far, but the mere threat of it can be a strong deterrent. The US laws allow pressure groups of lawyers and feminists to play a much more active role in enforcing the law than they can in Britain – and that, in turn, encourages the setting up of more pressure groups. Sadie Roberts reported: 'The funding of these groups is generally . . . by the Ford Foundation and one or two other major funds. These groups between them have to a great extent filled in the gaps where the government agencies showed themselves unable or unwilling to act and it is alarming to think what progress the EEO effort would have made if those funds had not been available.' There are no equivalent sources of funds in Britain – except the EOC, whose hand-out budget would be a drop in Ford's ocean.

WHO STANDS FOR EUROPE?

In June Britain votes in the first direct election to the European Parliament.

What sort of people will represent us in Europe? How many will work for the European idea that set up the Parliament, how many will try to sabotage it?

In Westminster, Llew Gardner asks the candidates themselves about their views and hopes for Europe's Parliament.

The Thames Debate

Monday 12 March
at 11.30 pm
on London's ITV

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London Diary

☐ We are now entering what is known as the 'Zinoviev letter period', which always precedes general elections when Labour is in office. In October, 1924, the first Labour government was thrown out in an atmosphere of anti-Communist hysteria. The atmosphere had been carefully created by the publication, four days before polling day, of a 'letter' from the head of the Communist International, Zinoviev, calling on British Communists for a big push to subvert the state.

The letter was a forgery, of course (as anyone might have deduced from the fact that it was published in the *Daily Mail*). But the forgery wasn't finally exposed until 1967 when Lew Chester, Stephen Fay and Hugo Young wrote a book about it. The authors refer in their preface to:

'Phase two conspirators, men who having convinced themselves with only the most exiguous evidence were prepared to employ the most elaborate and sometimes highly dubious devices to ensure the letter's publication: the British intelligence service, Conservative Central Office, the Foreign Office and the *Daily Mail*.'

Conspirators of the same stamp are hard at work today.

Just imagine! A secret anti-Government memo from the Permanent Secretary of the Treasury to other civil servant bosses arrives in a plain brown envelope at the offices of the *Guardian*! The sex lives of Labour Ministers, so scrupulously guarded by their entourages while those Ministers' jobs were secure, are suddenly public property. The most ironclad of promoters of closed government are suddenly available for gossip of the most exiguous variety. There will be lots more in the next few weeks.

Don't get me wrong. I am absolutely in favour of leaks and gossip, and good luck to any journalist who gets hold of either, checks and publishes. But it's worth remembering that the Tory civil servants and special branch types who are leaking secrets all over the place will be the first to demand the use of Official Secrets Acts, silencers and gags as soon as their government takes office.

☐ One confidential document which has been assiduously unleaked is the report of Michael Steed, Liberal Party President, on Northern Ireland. Steed and a handful of top Liberals went to Belfast in January, and were shocked by what they found. Their report proposes an 'initiative' which only just stops short of the 'Troops Out' policy of John Pardoe, the Party's deputy leader, and Cyril Smith – a policy which, I understand, was defeated by the Parliamentary Liberal Party only after Liberal peers helped to vote it down.

Steed's document emphasises something which I've thought was obvious for some time. The Government doesn't have a policy on Northern Ireland, except to 'hang on and hope' that the old antagonisms will fade away. They won't. Protestant supremacy, which produced the Northern Ireland state in the first place, depends for its confidence on British government support. If that Government support is enforced by the presence of troops, and even enlarged by the dreadful decision to increase Parliamentary representation from Northern Ireland, so long will the Protestant supremacy remain and so long will the Protestant state be unworkable except by repression and by violence.

☐ I rang Eddie Milne over the week-end to commiserate with him over his losing his High Court case against his union, USDAW. USDAW dismissed him and removed his pension rights when he lost the Labour Party nomination for Blyth, Northumberland, in 1974. Eddie's relation with the local Labour Party hierarchy had been soured ever since he took a stand against corruption. He was popular in the area, and romped to victory in the February 1974 election as an Independent Labour candidate. But in October of the same year, he lost to official Labour by 88 votes.

Eddie tells me that he has been registered unemployed for two years, but can't find a job anywhere.

I couldn't help comparing his fate with that of another trade union official from the North East, Andy Cunningham. In the Poulson trials of 1974, Cunningham was sentenced to four years for the most revolting corruption. That corruption poisoned the whole North East Labour movement, over which Cunningham had presided for a decade as a moderate and a bully. While he was in prison, his union, the GMWU, paid his full salary. No sooner was he out, than an old friend, Prime Minister James Callaghan, dropped in for a cup of tea. What a moving television programme that scene would have made: a former Labour Party Treasurer chatting over old times with a former Labour Party finance committee chairman; musing perhaps on the curious fate which took one of them to the top of the tree and the other to prison.

No wonder Callaghan has developed a distaste for Eddie Milne. Last month, most unusually, he wrote a letter of support to a Labour candidate in a council by-election – at Blyth. The message had the predictable effect. Labour lost. Eddie's Independent Labour candidate won. The result broke Labour's overall majority on the Council, but they have found some useful allies to keep them in office: the Conservatives.

☐ I try without success to fight back tears of joy as I read the speech of Mr Victor Matthews, proprietor of the *Daily Express* and other newspapers, at a Press Club lunch last week. 'It is vital', he said, 'and of the utmost importance to this country that the Press is free, independently owned, and can say what it thinks in a variety of fields.'

Wonderful. And what made it especially wonderful was that Mr Matthews didn't bother to qualify his remarks, as is usual, by reminding his audience that there is all the difference in the world between liberty and licence. An example of licence – the sort of thing which no free society can tolerate – were the articles in *The Times* and the *Sunday Times* in the winter of 1977/78 criticising cruises on the luxury liner, QE2. Naturally enough, the owners of the liner, Cunard, wrote a powerful letter of protest to the newspapers' editors. The articles, claimed Cunard, offended against a 'special relationship' between the newspapers and one of their most generous advertisers, Cunard. The editor of *The Times*, Mr Rees-Mogg, couldn't accept that this 'special relationship' affected his right to publish. The articles continued. Cunard, in a glorious spasm of liberty, withdrew £18,000 worth of advertising. Cunard, by the way, is owned by Trafalgar House Investments, whose mastermind is Mr Victor Matthews.

☐ If Margaret Thatcher wants to know how to organise a secret ballot in a trade union election, I refer her to the electricians' union, the EETPU. That union should certainly know, for they were involved eighteen years ago in a famous ballot-rigging scandal. Frank Chapple, the union's leader today, helped to expose that scandal, and emerged after it as a champion of union democracy.

Mr Chapple's supporters have just tightened their hold on the union's executive through the defeat of left-winger, Harold Best, in the Yorkshire and Humberside region; the voting in that election was as follows:

Bill Hayes	4,147
Harold Best	3,712

Harold Best has complained (unsuccessfully) about the distribution of ballot papers for the election. Some 460 ballot papers were sent by the Electoral Reform Society to union members at the address of their employers, a big electrical contractor in Bradford, N. G. Bailey. Major Britton, the cheerful chairman of the Electoral Reform Society, says that this was the address which the union gave him. He says that the ballot papers were either sent on to the union members' homes or simply handed out. He is confident that the ballot papers reached the members. A union spokesman assured me that it was 'definitely not' the practice of the union to have ballot papers sent to members c/o their employers, rather than to their homes. This case, he said, was an exception. What makes the case even more exceptional is that the victorious candidate, Bill Hayes, is an associate director of N. G. Bailey.

I asked Major Britton whether he was worried that so many ballot papers had been sent to the address of an employer, a director of whom was one of the candidates. He replied: 'No, because I don't look for evil in this world, Mr Foot.'

Well, neither do I of course. And Frank Chapple has sued me so often in the past that I prefer to leave comment on this matter to Mr Gerald Gardiner, QC, who represented Mr Chapple and his fellow plaintiffs in the famous ballot-rigging case in 1961. Said Mr Gardiner: 'What is really important I think is that the member should be certain of receiving his ballot paper, which can be done only by *him being sent it by an independent person. . .*'

Paul Foot

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ In deference to senior officers who find it rather awkward keeping their hats on while getting in and out of the official British Leyland Rovers, the Ministry of Defence is planning to switch to the roomier German-built Ford Granadas, it was disclosed last night. – *Daily Telegraph* (James Ewart)

☐ Punters have been advised to smarten up their dress if they want to mix with members at York, one of Britain's favourite racecourses. The advice follows complaints last season that some members were lowering the tone of the county stand and members' enclosure by exposing their braces and walking about in shirtsleeves. – *Guardian* (E. O. Parrott)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Chinese retaliation

Sir, Much interesting information was contained, most of it probably credible, in the article by Anthony Barnett on China and Vietnam (NS 23 February). But I felt that two elements in the pattern were strangely missing. First we should have welcomed more detail concerning the aid which China gave to Vietnam during the American war. Was the Soviet Union really 'their main source of support'? Surely the assistance given by China was at least on an equivalent scale, and acknowledged to be so by the Vietnamese Government of the time. And did it not continue for some years after the end of the war?

Secondly nothing was said of the expulsion of the ethnic Chinese from Vietnam early last year; yet this must surely have been a serious factor in the origins of the present border conflict. It so happened that I was in China during April and May '78 and towards the end of that time I was visiting the Hsing-Lung State Farm on Hainan Island. The first batch of refugees from Vietnam, out of the tens or even hundreds of thousands who eventually came, had already arrived, and I spent an afternoon listening to them. They were resettled and received with great kindness by the Chinese in Hainan and Kuangtung, but were rather shattered by their experiences.

If my memory is right, the policy agreed between China and several South-east Asian countries (including Vietnam) a number of years ago, was that Chinese in those countries should be encouraged to take local citizenship, but if they did not want to do so they were not to be discriminated against. Now what happened to the Vietnam-born ethnic Chinese in North Vietnam was that if they were not prepared to take Vietnamese citizenship, their children could not get schooling, their jobs and eventually their work-permits were taken away, and finally their ration-cards also – so that they had no option in the end but to start on the trek to China. But even if they had taken Vietnamese citizenship, the same things could, and often did, happen. The prevailing attitude of the Vietnamese themselves was apathetic, and very few did anything to defend their former friends.

Many of the Vietnam ethnic Chinese families had been there for several generations. Some of the men were particularly shocked because they had fought alongside Vietnamese units throughout the American war, yet this availed them nothing when the expulsion took place. To term the exodus a 'recall', as has been done in some papers I have seen, is a travesty of the facts, according to the information I gained from personal contact last spring.

JOSEPH NEEDHAM

42 Grange Road
Cambridge

Editor's note: Joseph Needham, former Master of Gonville and Caius College, is author of the massive work Science and Civilisation in China, *as well as numerous other oriental and scientific publications. He is a foreign member of the National Academy of China and was for a time head of the British Scientific Mission in China. He is currently Director of the East Asian History of Science Library in Cambridge.*

Vickers in history

Sir, In their whiz through the history of the British armament industry (NS 23 February), Christopher Hird and Patrick Wintour, like eager but bemused tourists, derive some striking but inaccurate impressions. Thus they speak of Vickers' Elswick and Scotswood works and their 'long dependence on easy profits from the trade in weaponry.' But the profits were sometimes far from easy, nor did Elswick and Scotswood always depend on weaponry; the near-disaster of the mid-twenties was associated, both for Vickers and for Armstrong Whitworth, with great efforts to find new products and new markets.

There is a related misconception that Vickers in their 'manly noon' (whatever that may have been) 'knew little of market forces, or of competition. It lived in a settled world of Whitehall contracts.' But Whitehall contracts were highly competitive; there might, for example, be half a dozen or more competitors to design an aircraft to an Air Ministry specification. Anyway, much of the company's business was foreign, and here there was a widespread feeling that the private armament companies were *too* competitive. (See, for example, the Report of the Temporary Mixed Commission of the League of Nations, League of Nations document A81, 1921; the records of the Nye Committee in the United States, 1934; and the Report of the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture of Arms, 136, Cmd. 5292).

Throughout, Hird and Wintour seem unclear about dates. To begin at the beginning, Vickers had its infancy not in Victorian entrepreneurship as they say, but in the 18th century. Again, they refer to Vickers' purchase of 'the Spitfire builders, Supermarine'. But Vickers acquired Supermarine in 1928, two years before the issue of the F7/30 specification which led to the design of the Spitfire by R. J. Mitchell.

It is wrong to say that the 'tedious' (why tedious?) business of basic research and design was left to official establishments in the 'boom period before and during the war.' No establishment designed aircraft; the Royal Aircraft Establishment, although originally founded to do this, had long since given up the practice. And geodetic construction, surely a 'basic' advance , was pioneered by Sir Barnes Wallis of Vickers and more or less forced on a reluctant Air Ministry by Sir Robert McLean, the Chairman of Vickers Aviation. Many other examples, relating to land and sea as well as to air weapons, could be given.

It is the more curious that Hird and Wintour should get into such historical muddles since they seem to attach much importance to history of a sort, and conclude their lengthy article with a remark about W. G. Armstrong for which they can have no evidence, and which even runs contrary to such evidence as exists. As for the tendentious and inaccurate history in the earlier part of the article, it is like the clock striking thirteen – it is not only wrong in itself, but casts doubt on all their subsequent statements, in this and even in other articles.

J. D. SCOTT

Gwyngoed Fawr
Llanddewi Brefi
Tregaron, Dyfed

The editor writes: Engineering and literature were always central strands in the English culture, so it no doubt follows that people insensitive to the one tradition will be insensitive to the other. All the same, it's a pity that Mr Scott – a professional writer of long standing – should be unable to pick up a rather plain echo from one of the greatest of English poets. 'Manly noon' is a reference from Donne's *Progress of the Soul*:

> And the great world to his aged evening
> From infant morn, through manly noon I draw.

The inference, of course, was that the financial monster Vickers had progressed into its own aged evening.

Even if a historian is allowed ignorance of poetry, he can't be allowed ignorance of his own work. Mr Scott, under Professor M. M. Postan, worked on *Design and Development of Weapons*, the section of the official war history which gives more insights than perhaps any other one volume into the decline of British engineering. *D&DoW*, starting from problems of armament design, shows that the decay for which we are now paying so heavily began during the inter-war years; when the British engineering industry, under private management, failed to build up research teams of the sort that were appearing overseas. To be sure, qualified engineers were in short supply, but 'there was also a deficiency in demand' (p.31). In aircraft, where Vickers held a major position, industrial firms relied on spoon-feeding from the government:

> The bulk of the advanced research in aeronautical and more especially aerodynamic problems was largely done for the industry by other bodies . . . Some of it was conducted in the universities and especially in the aeronautical department at Cambridge . . . A certain amount was done in the National Physical Laboratory and more important still was the work of the Royal Aircraft Establishment (formerly the Royal Aircraft Factory: p.32)

We meant, of course, to be mildly ironical in suggesting that British industry found such work 'tedious'. More crudely, it didn't seem to lead to obvious profits, and British capitalism has a particular lust (often, of course, self-defeating) for profits to be obvious. In 1943 the Fedden Mission found that the research and design staffs of American aircraft firms were, in proportion, four or five times the size of their British equivalents, and for more highly qualified. Inevitably, firms like Vickers were outclassed by the Americans when aviation engineering moved into new and more complex fields.

D&DoW is also explicit about the way in which the pre-war government provided the so-called 'family firms' (of which Vickers was one) with carefully-farmed government orders, and protected them from competition. Those not in the family circle simply could not bid for government contracts.

Vickers itself seems to have been remarkably infertile for a company which enjoyed such a dominant position in military engineering. Naval hull designs and fire-control systems were originated, and often worked out in detail, by serving officers or by official institutes: Vickers were happy to construct them. In tank design, Vickers did have the major influence, and, notoriously, German and American results were much superior. 'Geodetic construction' was, as Mr Scott must know, a costly and impractical blind alley: no successful aircraft has been designed to the system since before the war. The Spitfire's startlingly thin wing was, in its time, an inspiration – but as we pointed out, Vickers merely took over the Supermarine design team, which produced no comparable inspiration thereafter.

Vickers, in short, was allowed to acquire an over-privileged position in British engineering: now that the going is getting tough the board under Alf Robens can think of nothing better than preserving corporate profits by closing down any operations which don't have an obvious future. If Mr Scott reads further into *The Progress of the Soul* he will find an excellent description:

> So on his back lies this whale wantoning,
> And in his gulf-like throat, sucks every thing
> That passeth near. Fish chaseth fish, and all;
> Flyer and follower, in this whirlpool fall;
> O might not states of more equality
> Consist? and is it of necessity
> That thousand guiltless smalls, to make one great, must die?

*History of the Second World War:, War Production Series. HMSO.

Blacks on stage

Sir, It was kind of your theatre critic to come and see my plays at all. But he writes (NS 23 February) that he'd prefer my *Full Frontal* (Theatre Upstairs) to have been written by Mr Mustapha Matura. I'd like to point out that my central character, and only character, Gabriel Nkoke, is an inalienable alien of Nigerian/British origins; and to the best of my knowledge all Mr Matura's black characters are West Indian.

MICHAEL HASTINGS

80 Park Street
London W1

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Murder most foul

My first brush with really serious crime occurred when I was seven years old. We lived in Barnes, then thought of as a village and an attractive and still largely unspoilt near-neighbour to the rather less charming Hammersmith. Our house was in a road called Castelnau, Barnes's main artery and named, or so we imagined, after a French general who had, for once, achieved something. Further up the road lived two friends of mine, a brother and sister called Joan and Boysie (I never knew his real name), aged a ripe eight and nine, and one morning it was discovered, the news spreading like wildfire through our kindergarten, that their house had been burgled the night before.

I had by then started to read *Punch*. The merry illustrated jokes had my father in stitches and when they did not feature slatternly kitchen-maids with wisps of hair all over their foreheads ('Drat them guests!') or amusing social *faux pas* by *nouveaux riches* (collapse of Mr and Mrs Goldhoarder), they were quite often about burglars and so I knew perfectly well what a burglar looked like – burly build, cap, jemmy, mask, dark lantern and a bag labelled SWAG. They arrived on the tick of midnight and were invariably confronted by 'startled housholder' in a dressing-gown and waving a poker, upon which they said something appealingly Cockney and witty which always began with 'Nar, 'old on a minute, guv . . .'.

It was all tremendously exciting. The burglar, though obviously not yet at the very summit of his profession, had indeed arrived under cover of darkness and had succeeded in forcing open the pantry window (Joan and Boysie, snoring away in their nursery, hadn't heard a *thing*, little idiots). Reaching in, he had removed some items of plated cutlery and, evidently satisfied with the night's haul, had removed himself too via the garden. And in the garden, thrill upon thrill, he had left. in a flower-bed beneath the window, the impression of a sturdy boot, said to be size 10. My friends' parents, no fools, immediately erected above the telltale footprint a construction of glass to protect it from wind and rain and, thus preserved, to allow the lynx-eyed police to deduce from it the criminal's name and home address (they failed) and bring him speedily to justice. And the affair, complete with smudgy snap of the venue, got into the local paper.

I regret to say that the attitude of Joan and Boysie now became quite insufferable. Socially they were on to a very good thing and they knew it. No Victorian hostess with a lion to parade ('Mr Browning may be looking in later') could have been more unbearably condescending. Invitations to tea showered down like a ticker-tape welcome and were visited on anybody who looked even remotely as though they were going to be properly impressed. Through 'influence' (my nanny was a friend of their nanny) I went several times. The moment the last ginger-snap had disappeared and the ritual 'May we please get down now?' had been said to whichever adult was presiding at the tea-table, Boysie would, elaborately casual, ask 'Care to see the bootmark?'. And out we went into the garden and there, still fully visible among some rather horrid smelling nasturtiums, was the evidence of crime and of the speedy get-away. Then Joan, gracious as could be, would lead an expedition to the pantry so that we could picture the evil and no doubt grimy hand reaching in, the soft clicking of forks and spoons being gathered up, the malevolent eyes glinting.

A few years later I was brought face to face with murder, or so I rated it in my somewhat over-heated imagination. Motoring with my parents to have tea with a great-aunt resident in north Islington, we went bowling up the Camden Road and passed a street called Hilldrop Crescent and I first heard mention, lowered though the voices might be, of somebody called Crippen. And enquiring subsequently here and there, I was able to discover for what reason he was famous. One of the many disadvantages of getting murdered is that, in addition to having to put up with the numerous inconveniences connected with a premature death, the victim almost always sinks away into a complete anonymity. The murderer hogs the limelight: the dead body is nothing. Posterity's favours in the field of fame are lavished on wrong-doers. We may remember that Dr Crippen's friend (found to be, probably correctly, innocent) was Ethel le Neve, and some may recall that his murdered wife was a buxom stage artiste who called herself Belle Elmore, but who could now produce her real name? Though she might call herself 'Cora Turner' when not before her public, her actual name, wisely suppressed, was Kunigunde Mackamotzki.

And it was the epithet 'Crippen' that, a bare three years later, was hurled by an outraged and suspicious landlady at a man called George Joseph Smith after a rather splashy bathroom fatality in her highly respectable Blackpool lodging-house and involving the death of another Mrs Smith. Now who, even if their life, so to speak, depended on it, could name a single one of the ladies who so unwisely tippy-toed up the aisle to wed this lethal bigamist? Deplorably unfair though it may be, they are, alas, mere stage props in this especially sensational melodrama. Mr Smith's method of procedure, for why try anything new when the results were so satisfactory, never varied. With the bride secured and her money made over to him, he hastened out of their furnished rooms and purchased from an ironmonger an enamel bath. Doubtless besotted with his whiskers and winning ways, the ladies seem to have fallen in with his friendly plan to join them, if temporarily, in the room where the bath was set up as he would be useful in carrying up hot water. But with what husbandly wiles did he persuade them to disrobe, step into the filled bath and overlook his continued presence at what should have been a purely private time? Did he possibly suggest to the wife of the moment that she should wash her woman's glory and offer to lend a hand ('Come dear, let me soap your bun'). It was his habit, the deed once done, to hurry to the nearest harmonium and, pedalling vigorously, send out a musical message into the night ('Nearer My God To Thee') that another loved one had perished aquatically.

Whoever claims never to have been morbidly fascinated by murder is almost certainly lying. Even with a bad road accident, it is not away from the distressing and horrifying spectacle that people walk but towards it. Protests of 'I only wanted to see if I could help' are seldom fully accurate. Who can doubt that the House Full boards went up on Christians v Lions nights at the Colosseum? Human nature changes little, if at all, and Messrs J. H. H. Gaute and Robin Odell knew what they were doing when they dreamt up *The Murderers' Who's Who*, astutely published by Harrap at £8.95 a shudder – a detailed review of the most remarkable murders of the last 150 years, appallingly fully illustrated and utterly not for the squeamish.

Here is the cellar at Hilldrop Crescent where selected portions of Kunigunde found their not very final resting place (she was identified by a piece of abdominal scar tissue). Here is the far from empty trunk which, by sensory means, announced its presence in 1927 in the Charing Cross left-luggage office at a time when, or so it seemed, no such railway office anywhere in the country was considered complete without a dead body or two. There is an electrocution and a guillotining and several corpses (I always understood that such photographs were official ones and forbidden to see a public light of day). A classified index announces place of demise and murder method (blunt instruments tremendously popular down the years). Hopeless to expect, in one's priggish way, any sort of good taste to be displayed in this kind of thing but I would really have thought, mindful of the feelings of parents who are almost certainly still alive, that the photograph might have been suppressed of a friend of Neville George Heath after he had finished with her. Here again, whence and with whose permission come such horrors?

Roger Woddis

To a Non-Political Film Critic

'The Deer Hunter is not a political or a polemical film.' – Philip French, The Observer.

Permit me, Philip, to observe
I cannot but admire your nerve.
It's not political, you say?
What picture were you watching, pray?
The images that filled the screen
Would have made Dr Goebbels green:
The goodies were Caucasian guys,
The baddies all had slanted eyes.

Do you forget who raped Vietnam,
Or must I draw a diagram?
Gunships, napalm, towns bombed flat –
Perhaps you may have heard of that?
Or do you think though millions died,
There is a case for genocide?
A snowjob – oh, but I forgot:
The wedding-scene was finely shot.
To brutalise the human heart,
Tell the Big Lie and call it Art.

You'd fail, if you were in a camp,
To see the purpose of the ramp,
And, having such a simple mind,
You'd call the ovens well-designed.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Ronald W. Clark

The Secret of the Old One

Walking to his Berlin University office one morning in 1921, Einstein confessed to a colleague that he had no interest in languages, in food or in new clothes. 'I'm not much with people,' he went on,

> and I'm not a family man. I want my peace. I want to know how God created this world. I am not interested in this or that phenomenon, in the spectrum of this or that element. I want to know His thoughts, the rest are details.

To this ambitious task of discovering what God had been up to Einstein had already devoted the years that had produced the photo-electric effect law for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1922; a mathematical analysis of Brownian motion; and the Special and General theories of relativity. He was to devote the rest of his life to his task, searching almost desperately, but without success, for a satisfactory theory which would unify the fields of gravity and electromagnetism.

The self-imposed mission was tackled with a ruthless dedication which echoed Shaw's artist, who would 'let his wife starve, his children go barefoot, his mother drudge for a living at seventy, sooner than work at anything but his art'. From the start he had felt time's chariot uncomfortably close; success had brought not relaxation but a firmer determination that not a second must be spent away from the great inquiry in hand. During his mid-fifties, sitting with the Governing Body of Christ Church during a visit to Oxford, Einstein held a wad of paper beneath the table with its overhanging baize cloth. 'I observed,' the late Roy Harrod has written, 'that all through our meetings his pencil was in incessant progress, covering sheet after sheet with equations.' Two decades later, taken in Princeton to what he probably knew would be his death-bed, he asked first for his spectacles, then for pencil and paper. Even now, at the last second of the last minute, revelation might arrive, as it had arrived before, unexpectedly, the reward of devout labour.

The devotion has given Einstein a secular saintliness unusual among physicists, especially in the age of the mushroom cloud. Niels Bohr had it. So did Rutherford – as long as saints can be heartily booming-voiced as well as meek and mild. With Einstein the quality was understood not only by the few who were familiar with the landscape of his intellectual world. It was apparent, also, to more ordinary people who sensed in him an unshakeable resolve to do what he believed was right: the people who, as C. P. Snow once put it, intuitively felt Einstein to be 'someone of supreme if mysterious excellence'.

This quality did much to explain the respect verging on reverence which he was accorded throughout the second half of his life. Other facts obviously counted. An ability to stride confidently through a mathematical jungle where most people would fall flat on their face every few yards obviously set him apart. So did the very nature of his work. When *The Times*, following the support of the General Theory in November 1919 by Eddington's eclipse expedition, told its top people that the fabric of the universe now needed renovation, it was evident that no ordinary scientist had been involved. Confirmation of a German-born physicist's theory, provided by a British expedition which had been planned during the crisis of the first German war and carried out in its immediate aftermath, added a piquancy to the situation. Headlines of the 'Light Caught Bending' variety tickled the popular imagination. On a different level, there was a telling contrast between the horrors of the Western Front and the apparently splendid uselessness of a scientific concept stretching across frontiers to answer a riddle posed by the universe itself.

There was also the quintessential homeliness of the man who in J. J. Thomson's words had discovered not an outlying island but a whole continent of new scientific ideas. The untidy-haired scientist, pipe in one hand, violin case in the other, capable of ending a press inquisition with a friendly 'I hope I have passed my examination', was the prototype of the figure immortalised by Hans Fallada and H.G. Wells's Kipps – or as Kingsley Martin described him, 'Charlie Chaplin with the brow of Shakespeare'. Incredibly, it seemed that the man who had discovered a rent in the fabric of the universe might be one of us.

Einstein was certainly among the most friendly of men. Yet the friendliness, sincere as it was, resembled the electron cloud forever circling the atomic nucleus at a great distance, a lightweight affair compared with what really mattered. Abraham Pais, who came to know Einstein well during the last years of his life at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, has written in a new centenary volume* that if he had to characterise Einstein by one single word he would choose 'apartness'. Robert Oppenheimer has written in a paper reprinted in the same volume that despite his friendliness Einstein was also 'in an important sense, alone'. Of course one reason was the nature of his work. Kept waiting on a Berlin bridge, he could honestly answer an apology for lateness: 'But I can do my work here as well as anywhere else.' Yet there was more to it than that: a dedication which, other men instinctively knew, made him different from them.

Most scientists who had first revised the human concepts of mass, time and space, and had then started work on the universe itself, would have been content to rest on their oars. Einstein had no time for such slackness. Before the end of 1923 he was pointing out that the conceptual foundations of the General Theory had no relation to the magnetic field and was asking, in the columns of *Nature*:

> Is it not possible to generalise the mathematical foundations of the theory in such a way that we can derive from them not only the properties of the gravitational field, but also those of an electro-magnetic field?

Thus there began his search for a unified field theory, a quest for the physicists' Hesperides. Eddington was among those who thought he might succeed. Less optimistic was Wolfgang Pauli, who summed up his belief that marriage of the two sets of laws was impossible with the words, 'What God hath put asunder no man shall ever join.'

Einstein laboured on to the end of his life, encouraged by the hope that a viable unified field theory would at least qualify the new statistical theories which physics increasingly used, and would thus help to restore the causality on which he had been brought up. After all, God had surely made the world that way? His feelings were summed up in a phrase almost as famous as his $E=mc^2$ equation. 'Quantum mechanics is certainly imposing,' he wrote to his old friend Max Born:

> But an inner voice tells me that it is not yet the real thing. The theory says a lot, but does not really bring us any closer to the secret of the Old One. I, at any rate, am convinced that He does not throw dice.

Maybe not. Yet it was becoming ever more respectable to maintain that He did, and at the Fifth Solvay Conference in 1927, then at the Sixth three years later, Einstein had to fight a tough rearguard action against another of his close friends, Niels Bohr. By this time he had already staked out his position in a message to the Newton celebrations in England in words that left no room for doubt: 'May the spirit of Newton's method give us the power to restore unison between physical reality and the profoundest characteristic of Newton's teaching – strict causality.'

More than a decade and a half later he was still fighting, telling Bohr:

> Even the great initial success of the quantum theory does not make me believe in the fundamental dice game, although I am well aware that our younger colleagues interpret this as a consequence of senility.

The barb at the end was hardly true; yet, as is noted in the centenary volume, Einstein had refused to accept a fundamental failure of determinism in nature and in the process had 'begun to set himself apart, intellectually, from the main body of physical thought and even of physicists'.

It is unlikely that Einstein – who had 'little sympathy with scientists who take a board of wood, look for its thinnest part, and drill a great number of holes where drilling is easy' – worried at all about how much he was set apart. More open to regret in his later years was the way in which he had felt it necessary, for a while, to step down from his pacifist position; more controversial, the unforgiving spirit with which he continued to regard most Germans and the vigour with which he took Max Born to task for 'migrating back to the land of the mass-murderers of our kinsmen'.

Before the first world war, Einstein had had little contact with the pacifist movements centred on Switzerland, where he had lived during his youth. During the 1920s, after a war spent in Berlin, he defended himself as 'an absolute pacifist' both in Europe and during visits to the United States. The change came slowly, under the pressure of events. In November 1932, three months before Hitler came to power, Einstein openly agreed that an

**Einstein: A Centenary Volume* edited by A. P. French (Heinemann £10.50).

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international police force, then being proposed by Edouard Herriot, the French premier, should be armed with truly effective weapons. The following summer he was supporting 'a *supranational* organisation of force rather than advocate the abolition of all forces'. And in July 1933, he unequivocally nailed his new colours to the mast. Asked to support two Belgians arrested for refusing military service, Einstein declined. 'Were I a Belgian', he wrote in a letter which he asked to be made public, 'I should not, in the present circumstances, refuse military service; rather I should enter such service cheerfully in the belief that I would thereby be helping to save European civilisation.' It is true that he went on to hope that 'the time may not be far off when refusal of military service will once again be an effective method of serving the cause of human progress'. Yet his apostasy was, rightly, considered a body-blow to the pacifist movement and it caused him great anguish – though not as much as his later involvement, misrepresented as it was often to be, with the world's first nuclear weapons.

The part played by Einstein in the birth of the bomb is frequently over-simplified and is usually concentrated on discussion of the famous letter to President Roosevelt dated 2 August 1939. This was in fact written by Leo Szilard – the Hungarian who had in 1934 lodged with the British Admiralty a secret patent for a method of producing a chain reaction which it was thought might be utilised in a nuclear weapon – but signed by Einstein. The impact of the letter is more problematical than is often assumed, and a close look at the evidence suggests that Roosevelt was as influenced by an extract from a 1936 lecture by the Cambridge physicist, F. W. Aston, read to him by the Einstein-Roosevelt intermediary, Alexander Sachs. However, possibly more important than the famous first letter signed by Einstein were two others written by him on 7 March 1940 and 25 April 1940, to Sachs and to Dr Lynam Briggs (Director of the US Bureau of Standards, and recently charged with investigating the possibilities of nuclear fission). The first drew attention to nuclear work in Germany. The second noted American research into a chain reaction, then stressed 'the wisdom and the urgency of creating the conditions under which that and related work can be carried out with greater speed and on a larger scale than hitherto.'

Yet surprisingly enough none of this implicates Einstein in the bomb project quite as clearly as at first appears. Early in 1939 he had been convinced by Bohr that only the rare uranium-235 isotope was easily fissionable, a fact of nature that in the context of current technology seemed effectively to rule out a chain reaction and both the bomb and the 'boiler' (nuclear power) that such a reaction might make possible. As late as the spring of 1943 Bohr himself sent back to London through intelligence channels from Copenhagen a report in which he stated: 'I have, to the best of my judgment, convinced myself that in spite of all future prospects any immediate use of the latest marvellous discoveries of atomic physics is impracticable.' There is no reason for believing that Einstein thought any differently three years previously.

Yet there did, of course, remain the slimmest of outside chances, and if it was only one in a billion it was still essential that the matter should be investigated. Moreover, even if research did show that the release of nuclear energy was impossible, then that itself could have certain benefits; it might, for instance, provide yet one more clue to the way in which God had been operating. The outcome was of course very different, an outcome that brought Einstein's 'Alas' when he heard of Hiroshima and the dedication to international nuclear control which marked the last decade of his life.

His concern with the juxtaposition of good ends and evil means was deep, strong and lasting, and not only as it concerned the waging of the second world war. One thing which weighed heavily upon him, he admitted after the foundation of Israel, was 'the fact that we were compelled by the adversities of our situation to assert our rights through force of arms; it was the only way to avert complete annihilation'. Yet the lingering regret, like the failure to reconcile himself with Germany or the Germans, was kept in perspective. It might be disturbing that the demands of pacifism were relative rather than absolute. It was somehow humiliating that the Germans had appeared to be, for a while, a particular sub-species of the human race. But Einstein's concerns, as he well knew, were of a different order. Like the solitary pilot of a small plane, looking up towards the deepening cerulean blue of outer space, he had begun to 'stretch out and touch the face of God'.

THE REITH LECTURES

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Helen McNeil

Up To the Hilt

Always Merry and Bright: The Life of Henry Miller by JAY MARTIN *Sheldon Press* £8.95
Max Perkins: Editor of Genius by A. SCOTT BERG *Hamish Hamilton* £9.95

Jay Martin's biography of Henry Miller is a revelation. Henry Miller wrote books about the swinging intimate life of someone called Henry Miller, but the closer the confessional fits, the more suspect its accuracy must be. Consider Henry Miller the hero-narrator, that sublime cocksman and exploiter, the man with the cosmological eye and the prescient penis, who makes those 'she-animals', women, 'gibber' or 'whinny like a horse' when he shoves it into them 'up to the hilt', 'bango!', in lavatories, in bordellos, at the beach, on kitchen tables, in hallways, until the woman crawls away 'squealing like an old sow'. In Jay Martin's definitive biography, this phallic bore, all prick and no perception, is revealed as the most fictional of Henry Miller's creations. When Kate Millett attacked Miller in *Sexual Politics*, she was, it seems, tilting at a windbag.

As Martin reveals in a study of great psychological acuteness, Henry Miller led a life utterly determined by women. Brought up by a cold, demanding Germanic mother, he went from an unsuccessful platonic romance straight into the arms of an older woman, who kept him in a state of uneasy subjection for seven years until he got married on the rebound to a woman much like his mother. Another seven years passed and a new ideal appeared, a violently sexual woman who almost destroyed him. The pattern of romantic intoxication, disillusion, and new infatuation has persisted for five marriages and 70 years. Perhaps Miller, still alive at 87, has just fallen in love again. While it's only human – or only female I should say – to feel malicious glee at the downfall of the mythic Miller, the real benefit of this splendid biography is that it releases Miller's novels from vulgar biographical interpretation and makes it possible to read them again as the fictions they are.

Miller was 40 years old before he wrote anything significant. In the Jazz Age, when everyone was writing or getting rich, Miller made his own Depression. Chronically unemployed and sponging off family and friends, he thought he had found the perfect woman in his second wife, June E. Mansfield, a vamp who was the first female to accept Miller's claim that he was a genius. June, an attractive taxi-dancer and con-artist, actually didn't want Miller to get a job. Instead, while he wrote, she would support them both by milking her stable of male admirers. When months passed without Miller, the kept poet, writing a line, June called his bluff and took over. Miller would be the front man and psychic victim while highly-sexed June hustled money from her ever-eager 'johns'. In a brilliant power play June made Miller write 'mezzotint' prose sketches which she signed and hawked to customers from her waitress-tray. Miller's first completed novel, the unpublished pseudo-Dreiserian *Dion Moloch*, was also signed by June and rewritten by her as part of a scheme to extract money from a sugar daddy who was impressed by 'her' literary efforts.

As man and writer Miller was being erased. June soon found him not manly enough and turned for satisfaction to the lesbian sculptress Jean Kronski. June and Jean then deposed Miller from his bed. Probably the nadir was reached on Christmas Day, 1926, when Miller, whose 35th birthday was the next day, went to his parents' home, broke as usual, with June and Jean (who refused to be separated). After dinner the two women cuddled on the sofa and fell asleep. When June packed him off to Paris a year later, there was hardly any Henry Miller left. His novels testify to a miraculous if complete recovery.

Living hand to mouth in Paris, where the natives were poor too for a change, dependent on the odd cheque sent by June, Miller met Anaïs Nin, who determined his next seven

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years. Nin, a europeanised American writer, showed Miller her *Journal intime* (parts of which have been published as the *Diaries*), and from Nin's example Miller saw that writing about oneself is a way of rescuing that self from oblivion. The effort to synthesise makes a better subject than a false, predetermined synthesis. Soon June arrived, and predictably Anaïs, June and Henry sank into a neurotic sexual triangle. But this time, Jay Martin speculates, the exploitation was mutual:

> Each loved himself or herself more than he could ever love anyone else. What were the two women for Henry except the image of his capacity to love and his need to be loved?

June, a fabulist of self, was one model for the cubistically fragmented speaker whom Miller now had the strength to write about in *Tropic of Cancer*. He drew also, I suspect, on Philippe Soupault's *Un homme coupé en tranches*. Nin's artful narcissism reflected back on Miller as a new, ever-increasing pleasure in watching himself perform in literature and in bed. Already he was the poet-*clochard*, a bohemian a few decades behind while being a stylist a few decades ahead. Later, in Big Sur, he would fall into the trap of public image that most American writers lay for themselves, and in *Sexus*, *Nexus* and *Plexus* he wrote the kind of mechanically scabrous books his audience would expect from the self-defined grand old dirty man of American literature. If his *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* became a text for Americans trying to escape from the cancer of their technology, old man Miller shouldn't be as surprised as recent interviews say he is that his novels became inspirational handbooks: a whole generation of young men couldn't believe their luck when they found in the Henry Miller hero a paradigm of sexual liberation that didn't involve encountering that other human being concerned, namely the woman.

For Miller, *Tropic of Cancer* was 'the last novel' in many ways. He wanted, as he said 'to get off the gold standard of literature' and finish the work that Joyce and Lawrence had begun. But he also feared that he would never loose himself from June's emasculating grip. When he ceased to obey her by making her the inspiration and the subject of his work, would he be able to write? Every bit of the fantastic verbal energy in *Tropic of Cancer*, *Black Spring* and *Tropic of Capricorn* is vital because these books are locked in a struggle with death. Their 'language of night' and their nervous shifting focus, their marvellous sense of pace, all take on even more power because they are part of an unresolved struggle.

In one sense the Miller hero merely does to women what America has been doing to him; but there is a deeper ambivalence. Woman are denizens of 'the land of Fuck', as Miller calls it in *Cancer*, the realm of material futility dominated by time. In the midst of sex, Miller's mind explodes out of their world – often into nowhere. Living in a continuous present of language is the only way out. The only safe pleasure outside language is with a clean whore, and the only truly pure pleasures are creature comforts – having enough to eat, or easing the bladder, as in *Black Sun*'s apostrophe to the pissoir. The juices and noises inside women may signal life, but they mean death. 'You come to me disguised as Venus, but you are Lilith,' Miller says suspiciously to the new woman and the new life. Most of the dreams Miller collected for Nin in the Thirties were about castration. The male aggression in Milleresque sex is real because it is simultaneously a defence.

Emancipated, demanding women like June E. Mansfield already existed in the Twenties, but as the first literary-erotic revolution was male, their reflection in literature is, for American writers at least, from an embattled male perspective. F. Scott Fitzgerald's Daisy Buchanan and Nicole Diver are trim-coiffed murderesses. In Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, Lady Brett Ashley's explicit sexual drives make Jake Barnes's mysterious wound a necessary bit of armour: no man could keep up with such demands. It is not surprising that Miller lacks all interest in fecundity, so important an aspect of eroticism in earlier Western culture. 'The ovarian trolley' is headed nowhere. Ovaries rot and have to be taken out; foetuses are to be disposed of. Above and below the human, but terrifyingly alluring none the less, the Miller woman is actually only made up of two parts of women: the pale, almost phthisic face with cheekbones, soft lips and a crown of dark hair, and its sister visage beneath the skirt. More might be too much.

When Anaïs Nin and Henry Miller thought of persuading American editors that the *Tropics* were art and not pornography, they had the good sense not to approach Maxwell Perkins, the shy New England aristocrat who ruled the famous literary list at Scribners from the Twenties to the Forties. Perkins made a rule of steering clear of the offensive. He had an eye for the sort of experimental writing that can safely be put on the mantelpiece next year.

In 1920 he published F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*. In 1926, on Fitzgerald's advice, he published Hemingway, though this was less of a discovery than his biographer A. Scott Berg makes out, since a rival publishing house had also signed him. Perkins edited the memoirs of Teddy Roosevelt's gossipy daughter ('We made a silk purse out of a sow's ear'), and squeezed the sentimental best-seller *The Yearling* ('a book Perkins conceived'), out of the pen of Marjorie Kinnian Rawlings. He threw himself into year-long battles with Thomas Wolfe, who had to be stopped from writing too much (would that Perkins had been even more efficient). In short, Perkins initiated the American method of creative editing, of re-writing as it should properly be known. In this system the writer proposes, the editor disposes. More intelligent, better adjusted, socially more adept, so much *nicer* than his writer, the Perkinsesque editor also knows best about writing.

Perkins's life makes a kind of mute link between the infinitely more interesting lives of his writers. A result of Perkins's central role is that almost all of the literary material in this biography has already been published by better writers than A. Scott Berg. The Fitzgerald-Perkins correspondence is in *Dear Max*, Hemingway wrote *A Moveable Feast*, Malcolm Cowley has published a memoir, and Thomas Wolfe, never one to do things once, wrote a book about how he wrote his books through Perkins, after writing a book, *You Can't Go Home Again*, about a prolific writer and an editor, 'Foxhall Edwards', who lovingly cuts him down to size. After the 500 pages of gentility and old literary anecdotes in Berg's biography, the Perkins method of editing appears in a fresh light.

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George MacDonald Fraser

Honour Points

Edward VII: Prince and King by GILES ST AUBYN *Collins* £10

In one of the Bertie Wooster novels, an elderly nobleman defends his eccentric behaviour and foul temper by arguing: 'You can't judge a man with a son like Edwin by the same standards as a man who *hasn't* got a son like Edwin.' In fairness to Edward VII, one probably should not judge a man with a father like Albert by any normal yardstick. That as a child, overworked and underloved, he survived the efforts of both parents to turn him into an impossible paragon, and their reproaches, criticism, and mistrust when he failed to live up to their expectations, says much for his resilience, his personal diplomatic gift, and his fundamental good nature.

These were his best qualities, as man and monarch, and they should not be underrated. Against them, his worst faults were that his appetites were gross, and he indulged them with a selfishness to match; he also seems to have held the curiously mixed notions of honour and loyalty common to his world. But in the general esteem, the balance lies on the credit side; few of his predecessors on the throne were so well liked, and of those only Elizabeth and Charles II had such gifts of charm and the common touch – and they both had advantages of worldly education denied to him. He remains, in the memory of his country, a raffish but popular old stick – an undoubted rake and glutton, but, as Mr St Aubyn notes, no monarch was ever the less well loved for that.

He is also uncommonly well-known, to the reading public at least; recent enough to be minutely documented, yet just far enough away to have his privacy thoroughly invaded by biographers. Mr St Aubyn's life is the latest of many; his reason for writing it is that he has had access to the letters of Francis Knollys, who served the Prince and King as private secretary for nearly 50 years – and loyally destroyed after his master's death those papers which might be thought compromising. A fair old bonfire that must have been. Even without such fascinating material, however, Knollys's contribution obviously makes this new biography of interest to keen Edwardian students, although it does not add a great deal to the picture, well-rounded in every sense, which we have already; that image – portly, affable, sensual, shrewd, vulgar and vaguely shifty, yet somehow reassuring – remains undisturbed, and it is not a criticism of the author to say that we are left with no greater enlightenment on the man, or his role in the world, than we had before. The truth is that Edward VII has probably reached saturation point, and nothing is liable to change history's view of him at this stage.

That view, inevitably, is liable to be as much of the age which he symbolised and helped to create, as of the man himself. It is not, from this standpoint, an attractive view, and one effect of a study as painstaking and full as Mr St Aubyn's – and it is sometimes a little overfull, of royal relatives especially – is to remind us of the vast gulf in standards and values and attitudes that has opened up in a mere lifetime. Concepts like honour and duty and loyalty meant different things then (not necessarily better things); even the much-abused term 'gentleman' – and seldom has the word been more strained than in its application to Edwardian Society – carried a very different connotation. Edward VII can seem as far off, in his trifling, selfish, unreal, artificial, yet vitally important world, as Louis XIV. It is to look back on a vulgar pantomime, or an unwitty imitation of a Wilde comedy with a tragic aftermath.

Yet if, as a social leader, and as a frustrated prince, Edward led a singularly trivial and pleasure-seeking existence – which to do him justice, he would certainly have made more useful if he had been given the chance in his first 60 years – he cuts an altogether worthier figure as king. In that role, it can almost be said that he was a necessity, and probably the best thing he did for his country was to bridge the gap from the Victorian era into the 20th century. How wise or influential a statesman he was is still a matter of debate; Mr St Aubyn admires his championship of policies 'which saved us in 1914' – an odd verb, surely, to apply to what *did* happen in that year.

But whatever his effect on the international scene in the fateful decade of his reign, he at least performed a valuable service to monarchy itself and, through it, to Britain. It may not have been so much what he did as what he was, or seemed to be; his grandson compared his impact as king with the arrival of a Viennese hussar in a country vicarage; by his style, in that it made him accessible and allowed his charm and good nature to work among his subjects, he brought monarchy up to date. It was no small thing, and worth rather more than some of the eulogies he received – parodied so neatly (by Max Beerbohm, if memory serves) in the lines:

> Wisely and well is it said of him,
> 'Hang it all, he's a
> Mixture of Jesus, Apollo, Goliath, and
> Julius Caesar.'

Not quite. But so far as the function of kingship is to provide a stable, reassuring figurehead, a symbol of national family and kinship, then Edward, with all his faults (and sometimes with their assistance), fulfilled the role.

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Peter Conrad

Librarians of the Night

The Star Thrower by LOREN EISELEY with an introduction by W. H. Auden *Wildwood House* £5.95.

Auden often fondly appropriated the books he read. He praised Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* as one of the 'small and select class' of books 'especially written for me', and as his introduction to this collection of scientific essays and poems confesses, he paid Loren Eiseley the same compliment of arrogation: 'I have eagerly read anything of his I could lay my hands on.' Arendt and Eiseley provide Auden with alternative scriptures. Arendt is the philosopher who studies the psychological and territorial alienation which was both Auden's personal fate and his poetic subject; Eiseley is the scientist who overcomes that lethal alienation by religiously reconciling human beings to the universe in which they bemusedly find themselves.

Auden's introduction conscripts Eiseley's science to his own private fads and fetishes. For Auden, an inflexible routine was a daily, domestic replica of ritual. Hence his ferocious disapproval of unpunctuality, and his self-enforced early bedtimes. His punctiliousness is justified by Eiseley, whose understanding of nature replaces the contingency of natural selection with a providential direction and design. No event in nature is random or unpredictable, Auden says: photosynthesis is not a lucky accident but a miracle. Our own personal time must therefore not be allowed to wastefully slip past, but should be, as it was in Auden's practice, rigorously scheduled and rationed. Eiseley calls himself a 'librarian of the night', interrogating 'root-inscribed bones or whatever rustles in thickets', and describes man as a nocturnal animal, haunted by tenebrous fears. Auden too was a morbid 'evening creature': he allowed himself his first drink at sundown, to celebrate the day's end, and at Oxford drew his curtains against the light, creating an indoor darkness in which he worked.

The affinity between Auden and Eiseley is stylistic as well. Both are addicts of the paradox. Auden sums up Eiseley's world-view by

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quoting a paradox of Chesterton's: 'if it is not true that a divine being fell, then one can only say that one of the animals went completely off its head.' For Wilde, paradox is an instrument of perversity, an impish inversion of conventional wisdom: hence the sacrilegious aphorisms prefacing *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Chesterton reclaims the paradox for theological orthodoxy. His paradoxes are Jesuitically ingenious devices for catechising infidelity and arguing it into submission. This makes them particularly apt as religion's answer to the atheism of science, as in the example Auden quotes.

Eiseley quotes another: 'things, in the words of G. K. Chesterton, were to grow incalculable by being calculated.' Here Chesterton's wit rebukes the arrogance of science, which invents an infinitude empty of God but forgets that it has been able to do so only because of those rational powers with which God has endowed it. In the act of eliminating God, Chesterton demonstrates, science actually proves God's superintendence. Eiseley likewise entrusts his last will and testament to a paradox. The final sentences of *The Star Thrower* reflect on the combat of species for survival, and resolve their back-slidings and eventual obliteration into an evolutionary victory:

> It was the failures who had always won, but by the time they won they had come to be called successes. This is the final paradox, which men call evolution.

Such is the saintly efficacy of paradox that Eiseley can even belatedly convert Darwin into a believer.

The Star Thrower is interesting as an Auden document, but to treat it only as that would be unjust. Eiseley's achievement is to have restored the sense of visionary awe to science. Instead of drably extending our knowledge by the accumulation of facts, science should, he thinks, alter our insights. Instead of colonising the world, it should admit the world's otherness and oddity.

The poems in this volume of selected writings are often trite, but the scientific essays are renegade Romantic poems. Eiseley's patient, enraptured observations of natural events accomplish the task of the Romantic lyric, which is to see the world in a grain of sand and eternity in an hour, to discover in an anecdotal encounter an intimation of immortality. The romantic lyric is a miniaturisation and secularisation of miracle, a glimpse of grace vanishing through nature. Hence Wordsworth's daffodils or Keats's fugitive nightingale. Eiseley's equivalents are an orb spider wedded in the buffalo grass of a Western gulch, or a feathery seed spinning 'on a windy corner of my local shopping centre'. The star-thrower, hurling stranded starfish back into the ocean on a beach in Costabel, is Eiseley's version of Wordsworth's leech-gatherer. Later Eiseley himself bends into an avatar of Wordsworth's stoical, resolute character:

> I am a man who has spent a great deal of his life on his knees, though not in prayer . . . The posture, if not the thought behind it, may have had some final salutary effect. I am a naturalist and a fossil hunter, and I have crawled most of the way through life.

Romantic poems vouchsafe only an ambiguous intimation of immortality. Nor can Eiseley afford much confidence. As Auden suggests, he is a melancholic, half-resentfully aware of man's isolation in an antagonistic nature. But even here salvation comes to him in the form of a paradox. Though human beings are miserably mortal, they alone of all creatures can imagine immortality. Eiseley quotes Whitehead's cryptic remark that 'we are . . . of infinite importance, because as we perish we are immortal'. Individual death confirms the eternity of the species. Auden was right about Eiseley: he is a writer who changes one's perceptions, and perhaps even one's life.

Morris Fraser

Why Anyone?

Guyana Massacre by CHARLES A. KRAUSE
Pan £1.20

"Tes Brother Ambleforth. He leads the quiverin' when we begins to quiver.' The antics of way-out fundamentalism have been the butt of literary jesters for so long that, like Stella Gibbons, we have real difficulty in taking the smaller or more novel religious cults very seriously. As a result, we greatly underestimate their potency and, confronted with, say, the long nightmare of Ulster, our sense of disbelief and bewilderment is all the greater; we try, as it seems we must, to wrap the thing up in an assortment of clinical technicalities, trying out words like 'megalomania', 'paranoia' or 'group hysteria' – but fail.

Still, it would be impossible for anyone with a trace of humanity to read about last November's massacre and mass suicide in the Guyana jungle coolly and without revulsion. The facts simply have to be set out as they were observed, and Charles A. Krause does this in crisp, serviceable prose, putting together an account which for clarity could scarcely be bettered. His eye-witness narrative alternates with a commentary, including additional facts and analyses, by other members of the *Washington Post* staff, and the book does read surprisingly well, given the speed of production and its multiple authorship.

Was the Rev. Jim Jones a schizophrenic with messianic delusions, was he a power-greedy dictator, or was he simply as idealistic and as ultimately pitiable as any member of his jungle community, his People's Temple? The narrative makes it plain that there was little at first to distinguish Jones from a thousand other Southern gospellers, apart perhaps from his abundant social concern – for blacks, drug addicts, alienated youth, the homeless, the 'disturbed flotsam and jetsam from the underclass of American society'. With hindsight it is fairly easy to read sinister designs into his fund-raising, his activities on Human Rights and housing organisations, and his offer to nearly 1,000 church members of a new, agrarian life in the embryonic 'Jonestown' in Guyana, South America. One could just as easily argue that his motives were of the highest – at least to begin with – and that the few odd anecdotes relating to his boyhood could be dug up about almost anyone. With rare honesty Krause recalls that, even on the

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day before the massacre, he genuinely saw nothing sinister in the Jonestown community; on the contrary, he was favourably impressed by the peaceful atmosphere in the village, and by the people's healthy appearance.

Krause was one of an odd little group made up of the liberal crusader Leo M. Ryan, a group called Concerned Relatives (of Jones's church members), and one or two journalists and minor government officials. Ryan's attention had been first taken by a few second-hand tales of abuses and ill-treatment in the Jonestown colony, and he had talked to a number of families who had been divided by the church's rigid beliefs. With some difficulty the party of 22 extracted an invitation from Jones to visit his colony in mid-November 1979. They saw nothing extraordinary; Jones was clearly unhappy about letting members of the party wander at will in the village and would not allow them to stay there at night, but in general the church members appeared well and contented. A few families, however, had decided to return home, and the enlarged group prepared to leave from the Port Kaituma airstrip on the following afternoon.

What followed is still inexplicable. The investigators, apart from a few doubts about whether the land could continue to support the village population, would report 'little to give rise to anxiety'. They thought that the colony had a 'noble purpose [which was] more or less succeeding'. As the group boarded the aircraft Jones's men opened fire; five people were killed outright and most of the others were wounded, some badly. Whether the massacre was planned in advance by Jones or whether, as seems more likely, he was by now failing to control his jungle *Wehrmacht*, plans went badly wrong. The gunmen did not manage to kill all of the party, and an imposter who was to travel in one of the aircraft boarded the wrong plane and his gun jammed. The soldiers returned and reported their partial failure; Jones assembled his church members and then, as the world knows, to the accompaniment of chanting, screams, and Jones's wild exhortations, a huge vat of cyanide solution was prepared and more than 900 people took fatal overdoses in one of the biggest mass suicides in history.

Why did they do it? Certainly the least edifying part of the book is the heavy bulking material supplied by the analysts, sociologists, prophets and apostles of the psychiatric-quote circuit who knew how it happened, why it happened, and could have told the world how to prevent it happening, if the world had only asked them. Then there are the inescapable comparisons with other mass suicides, such as that of 1,000 Jews at Masada in AD 73, and of the Albigensians in 13th-century France. Jones's movement is set alongside other charismatic religions, additions and subtractions are carried out, equations constructed, conclusions drawn, preventive measures listed. It is all made wonderfully neat: Jones was deluded, paranoiac, a Jekyll-and-Hyde; his followers were brain-washed, indoctrinated, suffering under 'total control of their environment . . . manipulation . . . self-criticism . . . induced guilt . . . militant enthusiasm'. And there is certainly no difficulty in setting out a coherent psychopathology: on the one hand a self-selected group of impressionable, dispossessed people and on the other Jones's supreme power of salesmanship, with some assistance from '40 to 50 automatic rifles, revolvers and other guns, 20 or more bows and arrows and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition'. We are told, too, that the collective suicide had been rehearsed at least twice in the past year; in one sick charade, the cult members were firmly under the impression that they were drinking fatal doses of poison until it pleased Jones to reveal that he had simply been imposing a 'loyalty test'. It seems that, even on the last 'white night', the poison was taken willingly, at least by most people. Again – why?

I think that the wisest man quoted in the entire book is, paradoxically, the anthropologist who just said: 'It could happen to anyone.' This for most of us would be the least acceptable summing-up, but it is probably the one nearest to the truth. If there is to be any talk at all about prevention, it has to begin with an acknowledgment that tyranny is a two-party contract, and that a tyrant needs a large body of assent from beginning to end. We would, of course, rather have the incidents cellophane-wrapped, isolated from us, diagnosed and labelled just like the pathetic remains that were flown home from Guyana at the end of last November. But the paradox is that if we are to learn anything from the tragedy we must allow a large question-mark to remain, and it must hang over vulnerabilities that exist in every one of us.

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Victoria Neumark

Under the Net

The Hydra Head by CARLOS FUENTES translated by Margaret Sayers Peden *Secker* £4.95
Goodbye Un-America by JAMES ALDRIDGE *Michael Joseph* £4.95
The Head Case by JACKY GILLOTT *Hodder* £5.50

> Terror is universal, justice is not . . . Every intelligence organisation . . . finally becomes a cancer that infects the society in which it takes root. All its heroes are reactionary, from Ulysses to James Bond. Which explains the exhaustion of its heroism, as ravaged as the plastic features of Howard Hunt.

No more coming in from the cold for the unhappy Felix Maldonado, hero of Carlos Fuentes's latest foray into the baroque labyrinths of the South American psyche. Conspiracy, it appears, is the leitmotif of our culture. Ineluctable forces of evil or history – a currently inseparable duo – pursue us down the years, ruling our most intimate hopes and fears. From this perspective, irony is your only mode of vision, catastrophe your preferred structure. Fuentes's meta-thriller takes the Arab-Israeli conflict as its paradigm of political dirty tricks; Mexican oil-fields, Mexican men and their passions are no more than the organisms on which violation and revenge feed. However many heads the human Hydra grows, 'the two-headed eagle laughs and devours' them.

This double-headed eagle – America/Russia – may be the final control on Felix, *The Hydra Head*'s 'unconscious hero', but it takes him a long, convoluted journey to find it out. A Mexican convert to Judaism, bearing an uncanny resemblance to Diego Velasquez, Felix one day steps out of a taxi full of hidden assignations and into a lost identity. No one in his office at the Ministry of Economic Affairs knows who he is. The parallel with Kafka, though, is fleeting: Fuentes shares something of the bite of K's narrative, but offers more fierce gusto – as well as more sex. Having declined the price of his name demanded by

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the Director General and his Arab minion, failed at a rendezvous with an old flame and found at a party his long-lost love Sara, Felix wakes up in hospital to the lustful embraces of a nurse, whom he remembers from the taxi.

Escaping with the aid of the nurse, he finds he is now officially dead. As if that didn't make life difficult enough, Sara too now lies cooling in the morgue, having left a message that she knew too much. But who put her there? From Galveston to Guadelupe, Felix chases the secret amulet of that lust for power which has 'stamped on the passport of modern history only one visa, that of terror'.

The Hydra Head is gripping, not least because of its sharply focused political discussions, whose dialectic is reminiscent of *The Magic Mountain*. Its éminence noir, the Director General, indicatively goads Felix:

> History and its passions sift through the universal chinks of violence. Don't you have a reserve of personal violence, completely separate from the political violence surrounding you? Don't you intend to use it to find out the only thing you know?

James Aldridge in *Goodbye Un-America* also explores the question of the permissible means for keeping a civilisation together. An American aristocrat, Pip Lovell, and a struggling immigrant, Lester Terrada, are friends whose strenuous debate on the nature of the good society is seen through the eyes of a third party, an Englishman. Ideals and the exigencies of his career finally lead to Lester's denunciation of Pip to the House Un-American Activities Committee, Pip's embittered exile and Lester's assumption of Pip's wife. A few years later, a meeting is precipitated between the two men in the South of France. Should Pip forgive Lester? Will Pip, notoriously prone to doing the right thing, forgive him? What *is* the right thing? The finale reaches an arresting point of moral suspense.

All moral heroism is not showy, and all spooks are not necessarily uncanny. Jacky Gillot's latest novel dabbles in the variegated psychodrama of the collective unconscious to bewildering effect. Where Fuentes has pinned out an octopus and Aldridge manfully landed a trout, Ms Gillott is tangled up in her own net. *The Head Case* follows the adventures of a civil servant who leaves his altruistic virago of a wife to teach prep-school boys in a seaside town. Munching his way through his landlady's cooking and pursuing an obsessive interest in archaeology, he is reasonably content, until suddenly on page 88 a vibrator makes a surprise appearance between the one and half legs of the schoolteacher who has the room upstairs. From then on Reggie is hopelessly smitten, and do what he will to immerse himself in his recording of *The Magic Flute* he is caught up in Forces Beyond His Control.

These include the antics of his wife, his landlady and his lady love in the anti-nuclear movement, the Persons of Restricted Growth solidarity campaign, and natural agencies such as pregnancy, dowsing, television, guilt, love and death. As if this was not enough, Ms Gillott has seen fit to infuse her bouncy *Cosmopolitan* style with a whacking shot of the numinous, liberally peppering the text with mythological extracts from the Hittites to the Harpies. What a relief when Reggie snuffs it: except, of course, that in the mythic underworld there is no death, only the endless turning of the wheel of regeneration.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Russell Davies

Bump Bump

Fighting an Italian/Australian called Rocky Mattioli on either of his home territories must be a foolhardy proceeding, and consenting to do it in a tent in San Remo is to add a touch of Houdini to the hubris. Maurice Hope could hardly have landed himself a more difficult world title fight if he had gone in shod with diving boots. As it was, he started the fight, so we are told, with a ricked ankle, and at a worrying weight only a quarter of a pound under the limit. Within a few seconds of the opening bell, however, the burden of handicap had shifted entirely to Mattioli, whose advertised rockiness, in those first moments at least, turned out to be synonymous with disequilibrium rather than indocility or asperity.

I have seldom seen a world champion so surprised by an opening attack. Hope's barrage of wide left hooks was admittedly a rather shocking departure from style and custom – one expects that sort of stuff, and not very much else, from 'Boy' Green – but Mattioli should perhaps have dealt better with blows that were so much in his own clubbing style. Instead, he took the last of the hooks full-face and on the retreat, with the result that he fell badly – in fact, he did not fall, properly speaking, at all, but performed that awful, dignity-surrendering manoeuvre, the Toddler's Bump: he assumed a sitting posture virtually in mid-air, and then made a vertical, shuddering, Tom and Jerry three-point landing. Of the three points – right hand, left hand and bum – the right hand came down first and broke, the shock running straight up the stiff arm.

John Rodda, the *Guardian*'s correspondent in San Remo, commented: 'Undoubtedly there was an injury but it did not seem to affect his fighting until the seventh round' – which is a pretty extraordinary remark to make, considering that for rather more than half the contest Mattioli was fighting with his right hand tucked motionless into his chest. The seventh round, in which his style was supposedly cramped at last, was a quite remarkable exhibition of one-handed aggression, a prolonged gesture of Nelsonian defiance in the face of imminent defeat. In spite of all the pleasure and relief one felt on Hope's behalf – he has had the full range of rough times, having been ducked by opponents, undersold by promoters and robbed of this very title thanks to a notorious home town decision – it was impossible not to admire the sullen loser, and to feel that if he ever does get a return (and he'll be lucky: the venue would have to be a reggae disco in Stoke Newington) he'll give Hope at least twice the trouble.

A follow-up report from Rodda gave, in passing, an idea of the kind of business boxing has become with the transatlantic TV audience looking in. Hope's purse, Rodda writes, 'was £32,000 because the fight was underwritten by American television. The first round knockdown of the champion *held the viewing figures steady* . . .' My italics signify a certain apprehension at the future possibilities this observation implies. Boxing, which has always been staffed by showmen, is equipped to take this kind of commercial pressure; but it does not take an extravagant visionary to imagine other sports cracking up under the strain and throwing their identity away. I can see sportsmen in all disciplines jettisoning tactics wholesale and going for the big gesture that will choke down the feared switch-off break. Who will be the first goal-keeper to drop his drawers unprovoked, except by sponsorial panic? Is the pole-vaulter already at work who will saw half through a spare pole in order to end his opening jump in an eye-catching, ad-attracting cloud of flexi-splinters? Such hams, after all, do exist even now, though their techniques as yet are crude: Nastase, I dare say, is the expert practitioner, having refined his calculating obnoxiousness to the point where he can now fall out with a linesman actually before the call of 'Play'. As for that traditional standby of the worried publicist, the Grudge Match, there are reliable pre-sold grudges even in ping-pong; The People of the Long Pimples versus the People of the Short – it's already a Swiftian fantasy.

And it makes one wonder how much longer Rugby Union can hold out. Most commentators on the recent J. P. R. Williams autobiography-money affair seem to have felt that the rugby establishment has made a fool of itself by putting on such a great show of peering into the rule book; however, unless the game's administrators do 'stickle' to a degree that must sometimes border on the preposterous, then the game might as well give way to soccerdom. (Transfer fees between publishers might just be the first fatal step.) Rugby as a social structure is already being pushed into a strange shape by its relatively sudden popularity. TV has made the international game a mass-audience spectacle, but in England especially, there is almost no local-level interest on which to rest the top-flight game: and this is a disproportion that actually shows up in the play of the England team itself, for only by about this stage in the season (weather permitting) do the 15 men seem to achieve the same level of decent match fitness all at the same time.

What the public would probably like, unfortunately, is more internationals – and there might even be some sense in this, since the annual Five Nations Championship would be a fairer reflection of each team's talent if it were allowed to play its opponents both at home and away. (More internationals might also mean more opportunity for people to attend in person; I for one would relish the chance of getting inside the Welsh National Stadium and convincing a few of the drunks there that they now constitute the least tuneful chorale in the four home countries.) But the priority, obviously, has to be some sort of season-long championship – surely the Bowker system will do for a start – that will

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give some shape and purpose to the weekly game that supplies England with its players. For perhaps the oddest thing about rugby is that the supply continues unabated; there is no prospect of any shortage of middle-class masochists prepared to plunge face first into the booted chaos that is ruck-and-maul. The urge to literal selflessness must be very strong in rugby. They want to have their faces rubbed off. It's remarkable. If Maurice Hope looked like Roger Uttley, it occurs to me, he'd give the game up. Either game.

Films

Ian Hamilton

Truly True

Same Time, Next Year (AA) *Empire, Leicester Square*
The Last Supper (AA) *Academy 2*

The prospect of a movie 'based on the successful stage play' is always a bit lowering, and particularly so when we know the drama in question to have been of the 'domestic' type. Not much scope for getting out of doors, but there will be many doors – at any rate, one exit left, one entrance right and a frantic determination that the twain shall (almost, but phew!) never meet. And of course anything even vaguely filmic will be seized on with whimpering gratitude: we'll see, as well as hear, approaching cars, we'll actually *eat out* in that restaurant described so vividly in Act Two, Scene Three, and now and then we may even get the chance to meet friends *at the airport*, instead of having them forever entering right, struggling with baggage. Any pleasure to be had from watching some desperate director seeking to 'break down' the stage conventions is invariably fleeting. If the play was any good to start with, it will carry on looking like a play.

Same Time, Next Year, to judge from the film, was a very 'well-made' play. Indeed, the whole idea of the thing depends on wonderfully stage-worthy features: the two chief characters *can't* get out much, their busy and complicated real lives happen somewhere else, their meetings are necessarily packed with dialogue about their most private and intense emotions. Also, the plot – as well as the theatre – requires them to be constantly bringing each other up to date on off-stage happenings: they are nearly always as ignorant as we are.

Alan Alda and Ellen Burstyn meet in 1951, wake up in the same bed and, swallowing the shock and guilt ('It's crazy, *crazy*! I mean, I don't even know if you've read *Catcher in the Rye*'), resolve that this one is for keeps. That's to say, they agree to meet at the same hotel for the same weekend each year. And so they do. Both are happily married, with fine, fast-growing kids, and they exchange annual reports on family matters: apart from the 48-hour idyll, they have no contact during the year. And this is meant to be the main source of humour and poignancy. The passage of time in the film is signalled not by rising or descending curtains but by black-and-white stills of current events – Marilyn Monroe, John Kennedy, the Beatles, Bobby Moore, Vietnam, Mick Jagger, and so on – and by the changing fashions and attitudes of the two lovers. These last, needless to say, never quite coincide: when she becomes a Berkeley hippy, he's voting for Goldwater; when he's impotent, she turns up very pregnant; when she goes into business, he freaks out into psycho-babble. Luckily, we meet the pair only every five years, so presumably they got it right quite often – but our fun is in seeing their faces fall as they weigh up each other's latest image, and our contented tears should trickle when, in spite of the new feathers, the old bonds persist.

Luckily, the film seems to know that it's more at home with snappy caricature than with turbulent emotions. The repartee throughout is hideously artificial but strikes lucky fairly often. I particularly liked George in his consciousness-raising manifestation, insisting on 'total honesty', and resolutely not to be ruffled by the new Doris's brittle, emancipated put-downs (or 'definite negative feedback', as he calls it). At one point, when he's mercilessly probing her 'true feelings' about Harry, she lets go: 'George, you're *full of shit*.' George nods, stands back a couple of paces, peers at her intently, nods again: 'Yes, I think I can buy that, if it's what you truly feel.'

Not so appealing are the intermittent eruptions of really true 'true feelings', as when the Goldwaterite George – accused of fascism by the radicalised Doris – reveals that his son has just been killed in Vietnam: 'He was my son and I loved him but for the life of me I can't seem to cry for him.' Doris's politics melt, her head-band slips, and George is allowed to bury his head in her now bra-less bosom – and really cry, as he should have done some months before. And this is the proposed laughter and tears balance – always shaky, often offensively calculated. A nice performance, though, by Ellen Burstyn – and by make-up (or was it lighting) as the years drag by.

The Last Supper is a somewhat ponderous piece by the Cuban Tomas Alea about how not to be nice to your slaves. A wealthy plantation owner at the end of the 18th century is aware that there have been slave revolts in Latin America and, after feeling a bit queasy on witnessing the torture of one of his own delinquent cane-cutters, devises the unpromising plan of inviting 12 slaves to attend a banquet modelled on the Last Supper. The board groans with goodies, and the blacks dig in, while Master tries to instruct them in the essentials of theology. Tough to get across the communion symbolism to an ex-cannibal, but he makes a valiant try and he also endeavours to catch his guests' enthusiasm for the strength-through-humiliation line of argument.

Unluckily, Massa he get a bit drunk towards the end of the sermon, and begins handing out promises which, come the dawn, aren't kept. The ensuing revolt has as much to do with his paternalistic rationalisations as with any broken pledges, and he confirms the hollowness of his hospitality-ritual by ferociously wiping out 11 of last night's 'disciples'. The twelfth gets away – the spirit of the future. There are several powerful and subtle moments but, in general, significance is pursued far too trudgingly. Superb acting, though, by Nelson Villagra as the Count, and by Jose Antonio Rodriguez as the 'sugar technician' who knows that, slaves or no slaves, cane-cutters will shortly have to face redundancy.

Art

John Spurling

In the Abstract

Eileen Gray *V & A*
Vienna in the Age of Schubert: The Biedermeier Interior *V & A*

David Hockney's attack on Sir Norman Reid and the Tate Gallery in last Sunday's *Observer* comes in good time. Sir Norman, 15 years in the job, is nearing retirement and the place badly needs a new buyer of contemporary art, not to mention (though I'm always mentioning it) somebody to turn the lights up. Unfortunately, much of Hockney's argument resolves itself into partisan pleading on behalf of certain figurative artists, including himself, coupled with the idea that figurative art is somehow being done down. Whether or not that's generally true, it's not at the moment true of the Tate, as a quick glance at the list of acquisitions for the last two years will prove. Leaving out sculpture – which Hockney also more or less leaves out and which is a special case, due to the almost complete etiolation of figurative sculpture – and counting only the works by living artists actually bought (not those presented by the artist or others), the Tate acquired 14 abstract or conceptual works as against 10 figurative ones. A slight imbalance, but hardly matter for complaint, especially when you consider that the Auerbach, the Bacon and the Kokoschka on the figurative side must have cost as much as all the abstract/conceptual purchases put together.

Nevertheless, although Hockney doesn't himself distinguish between abstracts, since he disapproves *per se* of everything that isn't figurative, the Tate's purchases have been fairly dismal these last two years. If you went into a private house which had these works hanging on the walls, you'd write down the owner as somebody who was narrowly fashionable but either habitually out or blind to pictures. Even, to take one example, the Prunella Clough – an artist as distinguished for abstraction as she once was for figuration – was badly chosen, an uncharacteristic and inferior painting from an otherwise outstanding show. Whether this is Sir Norman's own taste or that of his subordinates, he must, as he does, take responsibility for it. Hockney is right to detect a recent bias 'in favour of joyless and soulless and theoretical art' at the Tate, but he is wrong to associate that with the half-baked notion that 'modernism has come to a kind of crisis'. There is enough good painting being done in England to fill all the Tate's new galleries. Some of it is figurative and some of it abstract, but very little is going through the Tate's doors. We can only hope that the new director will be a person who spends more time looking than listening.

Meanwhile at the V & A, Sir Roy Strong (it's surely time he was disembarrassed of that

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tiresome doctorate) is showing two remarkable exhibitions of furniture and design. Eileen Gray who, as it happens, was Prunella Clough's aunt, died three years ago at the age of 97. She came of an aristocratic Irish family and settled in Paris in 1907, but not before she had learnt, working for a shop in London, how to make oriental lacquer, an incredibly painstaking process involving not less than 22 coats of resin, fine Japanese earth and pigment. Her early work – screens, chairs and tables – is unmistakably *art nouveau* in its decorative inspiration, but already demonstrates the plain, practical elegance which later brought her the admiration of Gropius, Le Corbusier and other modernists. She moved from organic, primitive forms – there is a *chaise longue* shaped like a native canoe and wooden stools with a rubbery look – to strictly geometrical ones. Most of these objects were only made once and one has a constant sense of their inventor exploring the possibilities of material, proportion and efficiency. This is furniture to live with on the same individual terms as works of art – rugs with simple abstract patterns, a desk or a dressing-table with drawers that pivot sideways, an armchair that hints at days on the deck of a P & O liner but looks as comfortable as a couch, an outdoor table whose top can be swung over to present a zinc surface to the weather or a cork one to the meal. Between the wars Eileen Gray designed and built two houses on the French Riviera. Light, airy, uncluttered, exactly calculated for all their purposes, with their graceful lines and their amenable furniture, who but Christopher Booker would not live in such surroundings given the chance?

Biedermeier furniture is in some ways oddly similar to Eileen Gray's. The lines tend to be curved instead of straight, and there is a modicum of strictly unnecessary decoration, but the Biedermeier craftsmen evidently shared her preference for elegant simplicity as well as her delight in the material (various kinds of highly polished wood in their case) for its own sake. The actual items in the show perhaps give a slightly false impression of opulence, since many of them belonged to the Austro-Hungarian royal family and must have been made by the very best craftsmen, but the style was general. The Biedermeier consumers were famously bourgeois. Metternich's politically repressive regime caused a turning inwards – to home, cosiness and a rather chocolate-box cultivation of the arts. Nevertheless, their cosiness was more Regency than Victorian: they liked their furniture to be placed round the walls so as to give a sense of space to the room; they favoured bright, clear colours and stripes or small floral patterns; their pictures were hung low and their furniture never exceeded a man's height.

Like Eileen Gray their craftsmen were inventive with the insides of desks and tables – there is a veneered ash-wood table in the exhibition which opens out to release a music-stand at each corner, all ready for your evening of Schubert quartets. Their silver, however, is an odd mixture of the plain and the over-decorated, and they let themselves go a bit with elaborate clocks and engraved and painted Bohemian glass. But it is their paintings which chiefly reveal their soft centre: sentimental portraits, glossy landscapes suitable for Sunday walks, and flower arrangements painted on porcelain to give them a high shine. When it comes to a peculiarly dreary picture of the Emperor Franz Josef working in his study with a real clock set into the illusionary wall, one begins to sicken. Admittedly it's classified in the catalogue as a clock, but the clock's pretty crude too.

Television

Julian Barnes

Chit Shows

This column is nothing if not a campaigning column. The widely applauded victories of 1978 – getting writers on to *Read All About It*; getting Esther's baby off the screen – were tarnished only by the miserable failure of the appeal for more sex on television; the only programmes which resulted from that, I recall, were a real bum-number called *Man and Woman*, plus a few arid reflections from Bernard Williams. The NS Spring Campaign, which we hereby launch, arises from Michael Parkinson's recently expressed opinion on *Seven to One* (BBC-2) that men did all jobs – with the possible exception of midwifery – better than women; and that in particular, men were far better at running chat shows. This sneer happened to coincide with the report of a working party set up by this column last year to investigate the place of women in television; and one striking, irresistible conclusion urgently announces itself: Bring Back Bakewell.

Remember the days of *Late Night Line-Up*? Those two film-buffs dandled on the edge of black leather chairs and sporting, as a distinguished predecessor of mine put it, 'tie-knots as big as your head'; remember the soft-voiced but informed interviewing; but most of all, remember Joan Bakewell? As the appalling prospect looms of nightly Parky on BBC-1, the memory of Ms Bakewell becomes even more golden, treasured, set tantalisingly in the amber of memory. Watching her made you feel that it was always the port-and-nuts stage of some relaxed but fashionable gathering. Like Martin Peters, she was 10 years ahead of her time. Intelligent, articulate, beautiful: I suppose the mixture just blew too many fuses in the programme controllers' brains; my God, they must have thought, if we let the public see there are women like that around, they might just start thinking that women have a right to take over our jobs too. And so, when *Line-Up* folded, Ms Bakewell was driven into the wilderness (I think I caught her fronting some bit of Tyne-Tees dross a couple of years ago), forced to pay the price that the envious and pedestrian always extort from the talented. Since then we have had the Apotheosis of Esther; Sue Lawley; the estimable Valerie Singleton; and a couple of newsreaders. Now, let the message to the big boys of BBC-1 ring out: get off your butts, share the late-night chat duties between Parky and Joan, and let the GBP decide.

The show on which Parkinson made his cocky claim, *Seven to One*, goes out at the dead hour of 6.20 on Saturday, and has seven averagely ill-informed youngsters doing their lumpish best to probe celebrities they have 'chosen' to meet. (The idea of 'choice' giving an initial impetus to a show is dear to TV producers; but how often is it a put-up job? From what I hear, the 'choices' involved in *My Kind of Movie* are not so much to do with the films as with the front-people required for an already more-or-less scheduled list of films.) The only dangers to a perky Parky as he outlined his normally implicit views of female inferiority were from his 'leather' 'armchair', whose arms skewed out at an angle of 45 degrees at the softest touch, and from overconfidence at his ability to handle the awkward squad. 'I see myself very much as a man who was brought up in a socially male-oriented background,' he preened; and 'My role in the home is basically that of my father in his home.' It's odd how those whose careers are based on an escape from their social background and conditioning are often happy to draw sentimental authority from it when it comes to their private life.

This week the Seven took on Edward Heath, who, I couldn't help noting, was provided with a solid, inflexible, no-nonsense chair with real arms. 'Perhaps I've learnt a bit from my mistakes' was his opening giggle-provoker; and an initially jovial manner gradually gave way to the familiar lecturing, hectoring, let-me-finish tone, culminating in the surprising opinion that all the Vietnamese boat people are either drug smugglers or fifth columnists. If *Seven to One* has any value, it may be in lulling its subjects by incompetent questioning into a revealing self-satisfaction. It's also pleasant to see them occasionally discomfited by questions they haven't needed to face before. I can't offhand recall Robin Day & Co. ever asking Heath, 'How do I get job satisfaction in a car factory?' Not altogether unexpectedly, he somehow failed to catch the inquiry.

The most telling moment in the Campaign Against Racism in the Media's useful if pious *Open Door* (BBC-2) came at the end: in ironic place of the usual credits and thanks was a list headed 'The following people or organisations refused access to material' – which named various producers and managers who had declined to let footage of their programmes be shown and analysed. It seems astonishing that extracts from news broadcasts were forbidden to be cited: rather as if a Fleet Street daily suddenly insisted that they wouldn't allow their published words to be examined on *What the Papers Say*. It was also interesting to have Stuart Hall point out the BBC's shifting line on the coverage of racism. Sir Hugh Greene used to maintain that the Corporation couldn't be 'neutral' on the subject; Sir Michael Swann believes that it is 'vital to display' the racialist viewpoint; in consequence, the more vocal and extreme the National Front becomes, the more coverage it gets in the name of 'balance'. Offering balance to the NF makes about as much sense as offering it to burglars.

John McVicar, for example, the first subject of Ludovic Kennedy's new series *A Life With Crime* (BBC-2), didn't expect balance; the most he expected was that when the police 'fitted up' criminals they might include the occasional 'City of London mover' as often as the East End villain. McVicar – billed as 'formerly Britain's most wanted man', though his record hardly seemed to justify that tag – proved shy, wry, battered and bright, and talked about being a criminal with the bored matter-of-factness of any desk slave: not for nothing is committing a crime described in villainous argot as 'going to work'. The

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humour, though, wasn't always so intentional: two of the choicer found examples were 'I very rarely mixed with criminals – except, as it were, to commit crimes' and 'Prison . . .it is punitive . . .it does completely kill your social life.'

Russell Davies will doubtless pelt me with mouldy scrum-caps and rancid jock-straps for saying so, but that incomparable half-back Gareth Edwards needs to be taken gently aside by the *Grandstand* folk and cured of his current attack of the Starmer-Smiths (this is an affliction, prevalent among ex-international scrum-half commentators, in which the wish is so much father to the thought that contradictory evidence taking place in front of the eyes makes no difference to it). At present, the only logical inference from Gareth's gushing, praiseful midmatch summaries is that both sides are more or less doing the right thing, both are shortly going to be well on top, and both will then drive forward successfully to victory. True, in the England-France match they nearly did both win; but such luck can't continue.

Poetry Competition

Blake Morrison

Money Singing

Most poets say that money doesn't interest them. For one thing they're not much used to seeing it. For another – and this makes the poverty more palatable – there's the poet-in-the-garret credo that money is vulgar. Still, it cannot have escaped many poets' attention that a number of their tribe are currently making some very fast bucks. I don't mean the grants, the creative writing fellowships, the performance fees. I mean the poetry competitions, and the big money prizes which they offer. Some of these competitions – Cheltenham, Stroud, those organised by the London boroughs – have been around for a bit. The 1978 *Poet's Yearbook* listed about 50 of them. But since then two much bigger ones have muscled in on the act. The BBC-*Sunday Times* competition had £1,000 up for grabs; and there was twice this amount to be had in a recent Poetry Society contest called (you could hardly get much slicker than this) 'The Most Expensive Poem Ever Written'.

The format for these competitions tends to be much the same. There are entry fees for each poem, and it's from these that the winnings are made up. There are expert judges, usually poets themselves: the Poetry Society had Ted Hughes, Gavin Ewart and Fleur Adcock. There is an anonymity rule which, though not infallible (judges admit that they sometimes guess an author's identity), helps avoid the distraction of 'names'. And usually there is a limit on the number of poems that each competitor sends in: this not only makes life easier for the judges, but spares the no-hopers from undue expense. To its shame the Poetry Society had no such limit: I heard of one woman who submitted £24-worth of 'bunny rabbit' poems – certainly the most expensive poems ever written by her.

Obviously under astute management these days, the Poetry Society also came up with the idea of a Miss-World like awards ceremony, held last Saturday week at the Commonwealth Institute, in which the names of the winners would be revealed only on the night. It sounded from the start like a programme for pandemonium, since 90 per cent of the paying audience consisted of people who had submitted poems themselves, and who were hoping against hope that they must be among the three winners and ten runners-up. When the successful poems were finally read, not everyone found it easy to be valiant in defeat. People at the front were heckling; people at the back were heckling; even the reporters who reported the heckling were heckling. Others welcomed the break between poems as a chance to reveal to the world their hard-earned insights into the mysteries of the art – you know, 'poets are like moons, they light up the dark for us', that sort of thing. The only halfway tolerable barracker was the one satirising the spirit of the occasion: 'better be good' he warned as Craig Raine prepared to read his second-placed 'In the Mortuary'; and then, as Michael Hulse came up with the gold medal 'Dole Queue', 'better be better'. Actually Hulse's poem didn't seem better: there was something too knowingly topical about its subject, and its punch line 'Is there a life before death' has only recently been used, and to much better effect, in a Seamus Heaney sequence about Belfast (where it's chalked up on a wall). But then, as everybody was indecently quick to admit, who can judge these things anyway: isn't it all a bit of a lottery?

To some poets it's much worse than that. In the current issue of Norman Hidden's increasingly useful magazine *New Poetry*, the MEPEW competition comes under attack from poet-playwright Christopher Hampton and poet-critic Fred Grubb. Some of their criticisms hit the wrong target: Grubb calls those who enter such competitions 'poetic narcissists', but when the going rate for the magazine publication of a poem is £10 and under, you can hardly blame poets for having a go. Nor is it clear why entering one's poems for competitions should be thought of as any more soul-sullying than having them published; it's just another market. But Grubb and Hampton do have a point: couldn't the Poetry Society be serving poetry in some more useful way?

There is also the question of the fat profit which the Society has made for itself. Work it out. There was, of course, a certain amount for expenditure: the cost of advertising, of administration, of hiring a hall; the £2,000 worth of awards; and the £300-odd given to each of the judges – pretty measly this, incidentally, so that you can hardly blame Ted Hughes for entrusting the task of narrowing down his batch to someone else (not that the Poetry Society was saying anything about *that*). But think of the money coming in: £11,000 from the poems; another £500 or so from the £1-a-head ceremony tickets; and more still from the 60p. competition anthology (most people bought this so as to find out whether they were one of the 'other' poets who had been highly commended). That leaves the Poetry Society somewhere between £6,000 and £8,000 up on the deal. I hear that plans are already being made for next year's competition; and no wonder. In the meantime it would be good to hear what the Society intends to do with this year's takings. An annual award to a book of poems? A subsidy to some little magazine? Some other incentive? It would be nice to know.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Dirty Business

The London Cuckolds *Royal Court*
Teendreams *ICA*

It is always nice to discover a bold new talent, even if that talent is three centuries old. Edward Ravenscroft is not, it seems, John Wells or one of our other contemporary parodists in a brush-nylon periwig, but a gentleman-lawyer whose funniest play fell foul of public taste after some 70 years of regular revival and has still to establish itself in the scholarly commentaries, let alone the modern theatre. To be sure, one can hardly claim complete originality for *The London Cuckolds*, first performed in 1681, by which time both Etherege and Wycherley had produced their best work.

Little Peggy, just married to an elderly burgher and pursued by the predatory Ramble, is the Country Wife four years younger and several aeons more guileless and gullible. There's much clandestine creeping into bedrooms, and much diving behind doors when the abused husbands return unexpectedly (which they do almost as a matter of routine) from their business-trips to Gravesend. And since there are no less than three cuckolds-elect, all of whose wives appeal to the unstoppable Ramble, there is a degree of repetition. For instance, cries of 'Fire!' twice disrupt gathering amours, which would surely have strained the credulity even of a generation still smarting from 1666.

Yet Ravenscroft has his moments of ingenuity, even on the level of mechanical farce. A visiting merchant convinces one of the husbands that he himself is a magician and Ramble his familiar, thus enabling the thwarted lover to glide po-faced and publicly from the closet in which he is hiding. A wife, ordered by her spouse to say nothing but 'No' to any man, obediently inveigles her gallant into a world of double negatives and thence into bed. And Ravenscroft's conception of his obsessive but luckless hero is rather more than mechanical or ingenious. Ramble's love-life is all coitus interruptus, a constant round of finger-licking pursuit and nail-gobbling frustration. Again and again this bedroom Clouseau corners his sexual prey and again and again he loses her. One such humiliation leaves him stuck in a basement window, doused with a chamber-pot, and robbed by passing chimney sweeps, who complete their entertainment by blackening his face. Meanwhile his friend Townley pulls woman after woman with his indolent offhandedness. Those who don't try get, and those who try too hard don't get: an erotic truth that should be ruefully recognised by many.

But Ramble isn't exactly an absurd figure. On the contrary, he expresses what one feels to be Ravenscroft's own delight in sex, one that makes some of his contemporaries, and

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certainly a clockwork farceur like Feydeau, look cynical and even smutty-minded by comparison. 'I want to kiss you,' he breathes, 'hug you, tumble you, tumble your bed, tumble into your bed, down with you, and as often as I down with you be sure to give you the rising blow'; and his captive listener, so far from shrinking from the intensity of it, is swept into a similar rapture herself. Indeed, all three wives find unapologetic fulfilment in other arms than those of husbands who treat them as possessions to be flaunted, used, or simply neglected, depending on their tempers. The play was regarded in its time as a scurrilous satire on self-satisfied aldermen. Nowadays it may also be seen as an answer to Lawrence's claim that 'to the Restoration dramatists sex is, on the whole, a dirty business, but they more or less glory in the dirt'. An accusation that may sometimes be flung at Etherege or Wycherley does not hold at all true of the Ravenscroft of *The London Cuckolds*.

And those critics who have patronised him as the kind of slicker who would now be turning out situation comedies for London Weekend or domestic farces for the Strand or Vaudeville should perhaps think a bit harder. They won't find his scorn for male pride or pleasure in the female libido in *No Sex Please, We're British* or, for that matter, in anything in or out of contemporary London. It is an attractive play, and directed with splendid clarity by Stuart Burge against what look like balsa-wood gables and balconies. Michael Elphick, all slouched vowels, saunters through the Wardour Street section of Mr Townley; Kenneth Cranham's Ramble is a sad-eyed, shaggy-eared golden cocker, forever being smacked and put out of doors, yet persistent to the point of self-destruction, dogged beyond the call of dog; and his favourite dishes are played by Nina Thomas, Deborah Norton and Stephanie Beacham, respectively representing the innocence, the wit and the religious zealotry that the husbands regard as their pet totems. Of the three, Miss Beacham is the most amusing, huskily fluttering out her disingenuous come-ons; but then she probably has more opportunities than her colleagues in a cast in which everyone holds his or her own.

After this exuberant celebration of heterosexual desire, it is a little dampening to be confronted with a piece which manages to suggest that, given the arrogance, treachery and/or inadequacy of the only males apparently available to them, women would do well to steer everything from their affections to their prams as clear as possible of the sex as a whole. Speaking for myself, I felt a spark of guilty sympathy for the husband whose wife simply ups and leaves him when he complains that her late arrival home means he's missed his snooker. It seemed in itself a pretty poor reason for taking a child permanently away from its father. But the protagonist, a student revolutionary turned crusading feminist, sees it as a moral and spiritual triumph, and so, presumably, must we. Maybe the fellow is a pig and a boor and worse, past consideration, let alone redemption. The trouble is that it doesn't even occur to anyone involved in *Teendreams* that this might need proving. In this frosty world man is not an individual, but a generalisation, an abstraction. He is a political stance to be rejected, not a fellow-creature to be challenged and changed.

It would be surprising if all the play were as blinkered as this, because David Edgar is its author, or (rather) co-author with Susan Todd, a member of the Monstrous Regiment, which performs it. The first half is certainly a dismal business, which confuses you with its chronological jumps and doubling-up of parts, and positively exasperates you with its refusal to come seriously to grips with a potentially interesting subject, the radical Left's failure to concede that sexual equality may be a necessary precondition to social change. But if this manages mainly to remind us of Edgar's propagandist past, the second half is rather more recognisably the work of the author of *Destiny* and *Mary Barnes*. The ex-revolutionary has become a teacher, and tries to lure her charges from their pulp mags and fantasy heroes, an effort which indirectly leads to an attempted suicide. Progress, it is admitted, won't be simple, won't be painless. There is even a debate of sorts about the perimeters of liberation in which a chary male view is put with some understanding. It still isn't enough to expand the mental muscles, but it is better than a boot in the groin.

Weekend Competition

No 2556 **Set by Fatboy**

Time for a rerun of a highly successful comp from years ago. We asked you to think up the most uncharacteristic remarks that famous people could possibly make. For example: Kenneth Clark, 'Look how the eyes follow you around the room.' F.R. Leavis, 'Whoops, boobed again.' Roy Jenkins, 'Round and round the rugged rocks the ragged rascals ran.' George Steiner, 'Could you say that again in English?' Bound to be a popular comp, so a strict limit of six entries each; by 23 March.

Result of No 2553 **Set by Stocky Jules**

We asked you (following Yevtushenko's recent example) to write post-partural odes by living poets.

Report **by Al Fresco**

First of all we had to check up that Will Bellenger wasn't Craig Raine under another name; and when PC 49's report came in with the confirming news that he was in fact himself, there was nothing for it but to let him take the last Bisquit. (A final vote of gratitude, by the way, to the munificent distillers of the said cognac; and an invitation to future sponsors to link their names with the glittering world of the Comp Complex.) This week, honourable mentions to Keith Bain, Matthew Mitchell and T. Griffiths. Eight pounds to Bellenger; seven to the others for, respectively, Heaney, Betjeman, Hugo Williams and Ayres.

This child emerges slowly
like a raisin from a dead man's mouth,

wailing like a banshee on hot bricks.
The attendants stiffen

like hatstands. Their rubber gloves
stick to their hands like cellophane

on a longlost lollipop.
The umbilical cord, a twist of pink licorice,

is snipped by the haberdasher's scissors.
My tears are hailstones
Hitting the instrument tray like stray
silver bullets.
In the distance, my wife

wraps the baby to her like lambswool
discovered in a forgotten bottom drawer.

This child is still sticky:
it has swum five Channels, freshly-greased.

WILL BELLENGER

The swollen pod
held him,
cushioned in nutriment.
Packed seed bowl.

Swaddled as a bog king
in his bag of waters,
safe in the salt love
of his tear globe.

The fruitful flood
burst forth.
From the shaved envelope
his head bulged.

He is a body
wrapped around a long vowel.
The soft ribcage bellows and bellows.
Ireland echoes to his innocent bawl.

ROY KELLY

Dear God, what have we gone and done –
Another brittle life begun,
With all its possibility
Of bliss: of hell, the certainty.
The bully in the lurking school;
The mockery of boor and fool;
The drain of spirit squandered on
The C. S. Lewis sort of don;
The parents' frown you're sure to earn;
The kids who disappoint in turn;
And all the time, the dread of death,
Sucked in and out with every breath;
And all the time, the ache of lust,
Consuming bones that grind and rust.
Another bloody life begun –
Oh Christ, do let him have *some* fun!

MARTIN FAGG

She is a permanent hitchiker
Awaiting a sterile pickup. A refugee

From the warm safety of a world
She will never again see.

I think I know about her. How her face
Will age with each blossoming cherry.

How she will always be alone
On the highway, seeing the debris

Of lovers and fellow travellers,
Writing her minimal commentary.

Her delicate fingers waver. Her smile
Is a benediction on my Olivetti.

SIDNEY GIDNEY

The midwife shouts, 'Push 'arder!
I can see 'is little 'ead!'
Me 'usband says all trembly like,
'I should 'ave stayed in bed!'
I gives 'is 'and a squeeze and says,
'Don't fret me 'oney bun!
It's woman's lot to bear the pain,
And man's to 'ave the fun!'
'Is face goes sort of whitish,
And 'is knees begin to knock,
I beg the nurse to bring more gas,
To ease 'is state of shock;
And when at last the baby comes,
I does the job real neat –
While the midwife 'elps me 'usband,
Who 'as fainted at 'er feet.

SUE DENIM

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Tony Miles

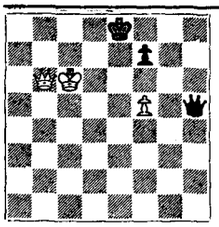
Chess

No 123 **N. Gaprindashvili**

An interesting feature of this year's Wijk-aan-Zee tournament was the participation of the former women's world champion Nona Gaprindashvili. To the best of my knowledge no female player has ever taken part in such a strong event – the average rating is just under 2550 and only two of the twelve players do not have the GM title.

After losing the world championship match last year one might have expected her to take at least a few months' rest to recover. Far from it, she immediately went off to play in the Buenos Aires Olympiad, easily winning her board prize, and now this. Looking at the list of entries one could have been forgiven for thinking that she might be a little out of her depth, but her first round game soon put an end to that idea:—

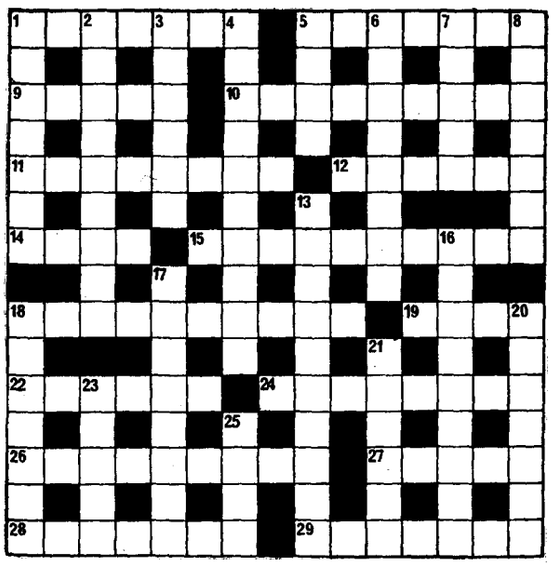
White: N. Gaprindashvili **Black: J. Nikolac**
1.P-K4, P-QB3; 2.P-Q4, P-Q4; 3.N-Q2, P×P; 4.N×P, B-B4; 5.N-N3, B-N3; 6.P-KR4, P-KR3; 7.P-R5, B-R2; 8.N-B3, N-Q2; 9.B-Q3, B×B; 10.Q×B, P-K3; 11.B-B4, Q-R4ch; 12.P-B3. A new idea. 12.B-Q2, Q-B2 is normal. **12...N(1)-B3; 13.P-R4.** With the positional threat of 14.P-QN4 and P-R5 with a great space advantage. **13...P-B4; 14.O-O, R-B1?!** Intending to close the queenside and secure the Q4 square by...P-B5. The drawback is that Black seriously neglects his development. 14...B-K2 was preferable. **15.KR-K1, P-B5; 16.Q-B2; B-K2; 17.N-K5, O-O?** 17...N×N was necessary. **18.N-B5!** Fairly routine in such positions, but no less strong for that. **18...KR-K1;** Understandably Black did not relish 18...P×N; 19.N×N, N×N; 20.R×B, but in avoiding that particular frying pan he lands in a blazing inferno. **19.N×NP!** Not, however, 19.N×Pch, P×N; 20.N×KBP, because of...Q×KRP. **19...K×N; 20.B×Pch! K×B;** On 20...K-N1 the simple 21.R-K3, leaves Black defenceless – eg. 21...N×N; 22.P×N, N×P; 23.Q-K2, N-N2; 24.B×N, K×B; 25.Q-R5, B-Q1 (...B-B4; 26.Q-N5ch and R-KR3) 26.R-N3ch, K-B1; 27.R-Q1 winning. **21.N×Pch, K×P;** Or...K-N2; 22.Q-N6ch, K-B1; 23.N-N5. **22.P-N4ch!** A nice touch. If 22...N×P, 23.Q-R7 mate, or 22...K×P; 23.Q-N6ch, K-R5; (...K-B5; 24.Q-N3ch, K-B4; 25.N-R6mate) 24.K-N2, Q-Q4ch; 25.P-B3 and R-R1 mate. **22...K-R5; 23.P-B3.** Now threatening Q-R2 mate, and if...B-Q3 24.K-N2 (or 24.Q-B2ch, B-N6; 25.K-N2! B×Q; 26.R-R1 mate for the exhibitionists) **23...N×P; 24.R-K4! Resigns.** 25.Q-R2 mate is unstoppable. If 24...K-R4; 25.R×N and mate on R7 or R2.



Problem 123
White to play. The position looks completely drawn, but is it? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 21 March.

Weekend Crossword 1295

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1295, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 20 March.



ACROSS

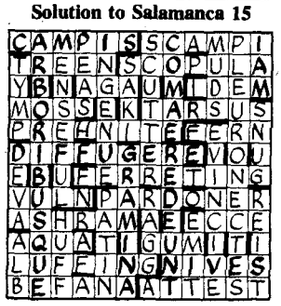
1 Look upon whip as protection for pupils (7).
5 Plunders paintings for Amy (7).
9 Medium of publicity within a city (5).
10 Method of reasoning which provides commander-in-chief with detail (9).
11 Occupations for period included in permit (8).
12 'Against their – day, which was not long' (Spenser) (6)
14 Prevent vessels returning (4).
15 Upset but passed away without strain (10).
18 Gaining victory for the general (10).
19 One twice given bird (4).
22 It gives one a pint OK, but the contents aren't fit to drink (6).
24 One is in a depression after order to be dutiful (8).
26 Conclude the matter in changing a point (9).
27 'Virtue cannot live out of the – of emulation' (*J. Caesar*) (5).
28 Slices which are like a female in the middle (7).
29 There is room at the resort to give us a lark (7).

DOWN

1 A mouthful I regret is brought up, but there are strong currents here (7).
2 Light showing the movement of water on rock (9).
3 Handsome fellow in love back in commercials (6).
4 Is shifty about what has to be paid for tools (10).
5 Bring up what is often brought up (4).
6 The cricket captain is concerned in what may crop up in the field (8).
7 Performed when the rest turned up in time (5).
8 Pleased when came first after a good mark (7).
13 English saxifrage (10).
16 A green bus ordered for small groups (9).
17 Plant which makes one duck a long way beneath a river (8).
18 What indicates that there is nothing in a playwright (7).
20 Taken to school, the bad learner cheats (7).
21 The journalist journeyed up about it (6).
23 The king is annoying when in God's places (5).
25 War spoils (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to Salamanca 15



Prizewinners to Salamanca 15

Miss I. M. Raab (Bristol)
J. B. Coltham (Stockport)
Dr T. O. Hughes (Basingstoke)

Salamanca Quotation: '*Diffugere nives, redeunt iam gramina campis arboribusque comae.*' (The snows have scattered and fled; already the grass comes again in the fields and the leaves on the trees!) – *Horace Ode IV.*

APPOINTMENTS

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The Library of the Royal Commonwealth Society has a vacancy for an assistant to catalogue the library collection of some 40,000 photos. The appointment, which is financed by the British Library, will be for a period of three years.

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There is also a vacancy for a junior library assistant which would suit someone looking for pre-library school experience. Typing ability is an advantage. Please apply in writing giving details of experience, with cv and referees to the **Librarian, Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2 5BJ.**

ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

READER

To work with blind proof readers needed in our Students' Library at Braille House, 338/346 Goswell Road, London EC1. Graduate in mathematics desirable; languages also useful. Must be willing to learn Braille. £2,640 p.a. (reviewed July) plus free lunch in staff restaurant.

Applications in writing to Personnel Officer, RNIB, 224 Great Portland St, London W1N 6AA.

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If you are concerned about **Architecture and the Environment,** and would like a career in weekly and monthly journalism, please apply to:
G. M. Collymore, The Architectural Press, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BY.

SECRETARY

wanted for

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dealing with employment legislation. No legal experience necessary but knowledge of trade unions preferred. Salary £63.13 p.w. plus 45p LVs pd. Apply Kevin O'Reilly, National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers, 308 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DS. Tel: 01-278 7801.

TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnson Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp. Fenwick's). 493 3005.

SMALL PUBLISHING COMPANY

wishes to contact someone with knowledge of the business.

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is a registered charity which publishes a monthly magazine of social & welfare law and campaigns for improvements in legal services. We need someone to keep the books and to be responsible for our subscription list of 4000. The applicant should be familiar with bank standing order procedure, salaries, tax & insurance (staff of eight). Most of the time will be spent on subscriptions as the book-keeping is simple and straightforward. Typing essential (not necessarily fast) for own correspondence and address plates. Informal office in Kentish Town. Staff work closely together as a team and everyone helps with urgent routine jobs. *Full-time job* (though we might consider applications from two part-timers—one for book-keeping, other for subscriptions). Please ring or write for further details and application form to LAG, 28a Highgate Road, London NW5 1NS. Tel: 01-267 0048.

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To act in the absence of staff members who work on a shift basis including evenings and weekends. Duties include translation from English and broadcasting in the relevant language. Applicants with the required language as their own or best, must have a good educational background, a thorough knowledge of English and an interest in current affairs. Journalistic experience desirable. Short-listed candidates, who must live in the London area, will be required to take voice and translation tests.

Languages required: BENGALI, BULGARIAN, BURMESE, GREEK, HAUSA, HINDI, INDONESIAN, ITALIAN, MALAY, NEPALI, PERSIAN, POLISH, PORTUGUESE, SINHALA, SLOVAK, SLOVENE, SPANISH (PENINSULAR AND LATIN AMERICAN), TURKISH, URDU.

For further details write or telephone Recruitment Officer, 906 NE Wing, Bush House, P.O. Box 76, London WC2B 4PH. Tel. 01-240 3456 Extn 2898 quoting reference 79.X.5.NS.

UNIVERSITY OF AARHUS

DENMARK

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Applications are invited for the post of English LEKTOR (salary approximately 125,000 Danish kroner per annum).

Applicants, who must be native speakers of English, should hold a good honours degree supplemented by a further degree or diploma in either Applied Linguistics or The Teaching of English as a Foreign Language. The successful candidate should be able to teach oral and written proficiency to undergraduates, who have had eight years of English at school. Further, he or she should be able to teach general and applied linguistics (including psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics) at an elementary level and conduct seminars within that field at an advanced level. Candidates who have taught on the basis of group work and supervised undergraduate research projects will be preferred. The teaching load is 8 hours per week.

Appointment will be from 1 August 1979, for an initial period of one year with the possibility of extension up to a maximum of six years. Before an appointment is made, the entire recommendation of the selection committee will be sent to all applicants.

Applications (which should be in four copies and include curriculum vitae, testimonials, the names and addresses of two referees, and details of research and teaching experience) must reach the Registrar, The University of Aarhus, 8000 Aarhus C, Denmark, not later than 18 April 1979.

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Sydney, Australia

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Details and conditions of appointment may be obtained from the Secretary General, Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF.
Applications close 30 June 1979.

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POSTS IN URBAN STUDIES AND URBAN PLANNING

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Annual salaries (superannuable) are: Chair — will be within the professorial range and not less than HK$140,820; Reader HK$102,960 x 4,260-120,000 x 4,200-136,800; Senior Lecturer — HK$98,700 x 4,260 - 120,000 x 4,200-132, 600. (£1 = HK$9.40 approx). Starting salary will depend on qualification and experience. Salaries tax will not exceed 15% of gross income. Housing at a rental of 7½% of salary, education allowances, long leave and medical benefits are provided.

Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, or the Assistant Secretary (Recruitment), University of Hong Kong Hong Kong.

Closing date for applications is 13 April 1979.

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Applications are invited for the post of

LECTURER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

for a period of three years beginning on 1 June 1979. Applicants should have a comprehensive background in Human Geography and should preferably have several years postgraduate experience in either teaching or research. The appointee will be expected to teach in a selection of the following areas: Elementary and advanced spatial theory, Statistical techniques in Geography. Resource analysis, Human ecology, and will be involved in the supervision of undergraduate dissertations. Salary scale: Lecturer R5,493-R7,527 p.a. (£1 sterling = R1.71). The British Government may supplement salary in range £1,644-£2,046 p.a. (sterling) for married appointee and £570-£732 p.a. (sterling) for single appointee (reviewed annually and normally free of tax) and provide children's education allowances and holiday visit passages. Family passages; superannuation or gratuity for those on contract terms; 15% inducement allowance for expatriates not qualifying for any supplementation scheme; accommodation is available at reasonable rentals; education allowance; vacation leave. Detailed applications (2 copies) with curriculum vitae and naming 3 referees should be sent direct to the Registrar (Appointments), NUL Roma, Lesotho by 26 April 1979. Applicants resident in the UK should also send one copy to the Inter-University Council, 90-91 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0DT. Further particulars may be obtained from either address.

FIRST CLASS OPENINGS in Current Affairs, Publishing, Charities and Business World, for Graduate 'A' Level Secretaries. Covent Garden Bureau 01-353 7696.

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The successful applicant will assist the Director with the work of some of the Council's committees. Applicants should have a degree or equivalent qualification. A sound knowledge of further and higher education is essential.

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Further particulars and application forms (to be returned by **23 March 1979**) may be obtained from **The Director, Regional Advisory Council, Tavistock House South, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LR.**

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Application form from **Senior Administrative Assistant, Audiology Division. Telephone 01-837 8855.**

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the newspaper of The Labour Party, is looking for a

Sub-Editor

The salary scale is £4,585 - £5,185 p.a., depending on appropriate experience in a similar capacity. The post is for a journalist with not less than three years' previous experience.

Application forms and conditions of employment can be obtained from: **The Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JA. Tel: 01-834 9434.** The closing date for applications is **Friday, 23 March 1979.**

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required for activity coordinating the work of Human Rights organisations. Secretarial skills essential; background knowledge of the field useful. Salary around £3,000 p.a., flexible hours. Apply giving details of experience:

United Nations Association Trust, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL.

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For further details apply to **SCM, Wick Court, Wick, Bristol.**

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Required in September, 1979, Graduate to share in the teaching of Physics throughout the school and Mathematics to the 11 - 14 age range. Some interest in Computing would be desirable as the school is in the process of acquiring a microcomputer.

Applications to the Headmistress, enclosing copies of recent testimonials, and the names of two referees.

UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER

Applications are invited for a post as

TEACHING FELLOW

in the Institute for English Language Education. Applicants should have appropriate experience in the fields of Research Design and Experimental Methods in language learning and teaching, including language testing, and research publications in one or more of these areas. Applicants should possess a postgraduate qualification in Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language or Teaching English as a Mother Tongue, and/or a postgraduate degree in Applied Linguistics. Valuable additional qualifications would include experience and a strong interest in:

(i) The co-ordination and teaching of English Language courses to students from overseas, and

(ii) The design and teaching of In-Service teacher training courses.

The appointment will be a continuing one to begin by 1 September 1979, at an appropriate point on the salary scale £3,883-£6,555 or £6,317-£7,754 depending on age, qualifications and experience.

Further particulars may be obtained (quoting reference L119/c) from the Establishment Officer, University House, Bailrigg, Lancaster LA1 4YW to whom applications (six copies), naming three referees, should be sent not later than 29 March 1979.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

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Salary within the range £3,384-£4,882 (under review).

Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Director, Centre for Mass Communication Research, 104 Regent Road, Leicester. Closing date 30 March 1979.

CHESHIRE

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UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

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Applications are invited for the following posts tenable from 1 October 1979.

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For one of these posts, candidates should have a special interest in the literature of the Romantic period; for the other, a special interest in either Renaissance poetry or twentieth-century literature.

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Candidates should have a special interest in the literature of the eighteenth, the nineteenth, or the twentieth century.

Salary on scale £3,215 to £3,384 to £3,634 (under review).

Further particulars of the above posts from the Registrar, University of Leicester, to whom applications on the form provided should be sent by 23 March 1979.

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Application forms and further details can be obtained from the Administrative Officer, SSRC Industrial Relations Research Unit, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL. Ref. ERS/IRRU. Closing date: 23 April 1979.

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RESEARCH STUDENTSHIP

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Applications including a curriculum vitae and the names of two referees should be sent by 19 March to the Director, The Peace Studies Project, United World College of the Atlantic, Llantwit Major, South Glamorgan, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

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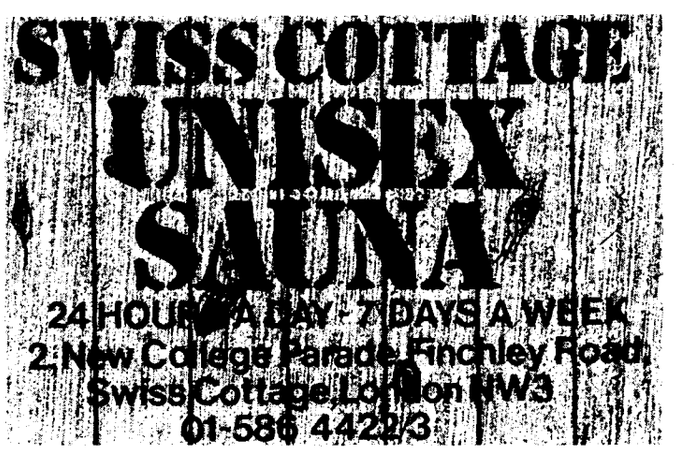

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Delays in Distribution

We wish to apologise to readers who were unable to obtain copies of last week's New Statesman at the normal time. The delays were caused by an industrial dispute at our printers, which is unresolved at the time of going to press.

Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Info 836 5332. 14-24 Mar. Final perfs 'Coriolanus' prior to European tour. Postal bkg now for 'Love's Labour's Lost', 'The Taming of The Shrew', and Bulgakov's 'The White Guard' — season opens 9 Apr.

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NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'A Fair Quarrel', 'The Fruits of Enlightenment', 'Strife', 'The Philanderer', 'For Services Rendered', 'The Long Voyage Home'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Eves 8, Sats 5 & 8.30. 'The London Cuckolds'. Edward Ravenscroft's Restoration farce.

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Meetings

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CAMDEN COUNCIL for International Co-operation 'Immigration and the Rights of Refugees' Sarah Leigh. Wed. 14 March 6 p.m. at Polytechnic of North London, Prince of Wales Rd, NW5.

HUMAN RIGHTS — the link with foreign policy trade and aid. Fabian Seminar. 24 March, 10.30 to 4.30, 24 Tufton Street. Judith Hart MP, Phillip Whitehead MP. £2 at door or in advance from Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth St, London SW1. 01-930 3077.

SHAW SOCIETY. Michael Stewart MP on 'Shaw and Wells'. Joint meeting with H. G. Wells Society, Friday 16 March 7 p.m. at London House, Mecklenburgh Square, WC1 (Churchill Room).

MARX MEMORIAL LIBRARY. Annual Marx Memorial Lecture: 'Recent Developments in the Marxist theory of Ideology', speaker Stuart Hall (Institute of Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham). Fri. 16 Mar. 7.30 p.m. NUFTO Hall, Jockey's Fields (off Theobald's Rd), London WC1.

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THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sun. 11 Mar. 8 p.m. Open Question/Answer Meeting. All welc. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

'IVORY TOWERS, THE GLASS BEAD GAME, AND OPEN SOCIETIES: The Social Functions of Comparative Education'

An inaugural Lecture by
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on Tuesday 13 March 5.30 p.m.

University of London Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London WC1. Tel: 01-636 1500.

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Courses

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY and Economic Development. Weekend residential course at Urchfont Manor, Nr Devizes, Wilts, 16-18 March organised by Royal Anthropological Institute, with Margaret Hardiman, Prof. Lucy Mair, A. F. Robertson, and films on Cyprus and Kenya. Fee £17. Inquiries: RAI, 56 Queen Anne Street, W1. Tel. 486 6832.

DORSET SUMMER SCHOOL — Archaeology, Hardy, Seashore, etc. 21-28 July, 28 July-4 Aug. Details from WEA, 17 Princess Victoria St, Bristol. Tel. 0272 32630.

COMMUNIST UNIVERSITY Newcastle Students Union 16-18 March course includes politics and culture, Marxist theory, sexual politics, industrial politics, North needs socialism, plus 2 plenary sessions, music, film and social. Contact C. Brown, 64 Corchester Walk, Newcastle NE7.

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